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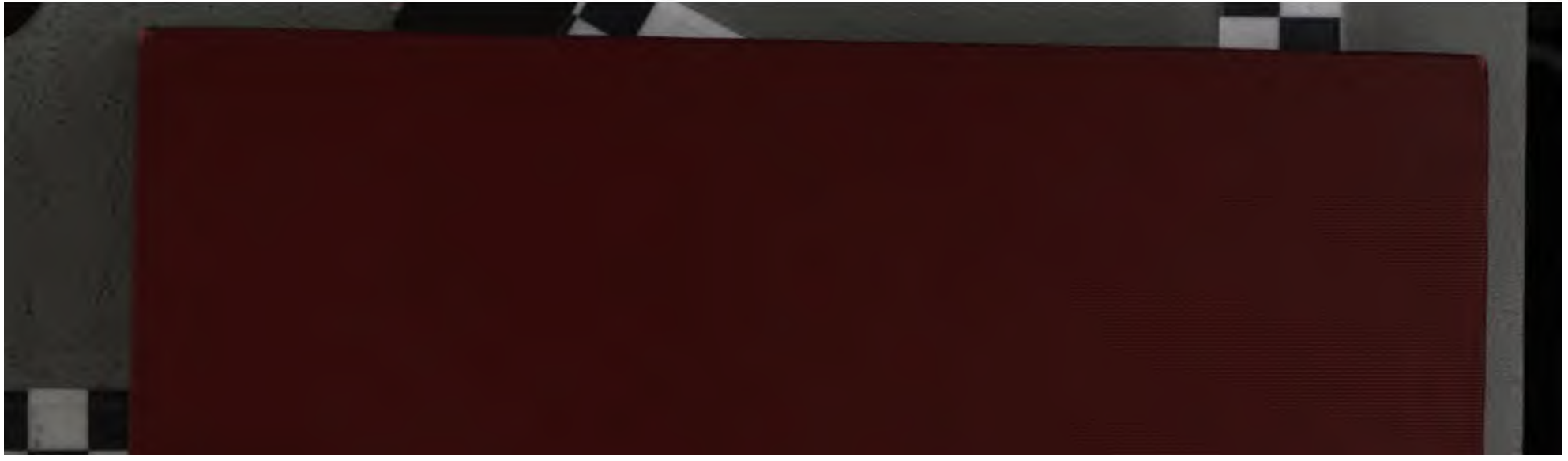

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THE
WINNING OF THE WEST

AN ACCOUNT OF THE EXPLORATION AND SETTLEMENT OF OUR COUNTRY FROM THE ALLEGHANIES TO THE PACIFIC

By

THEODORE ROOSEVELT

VOLUME V.

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THE WINNING OF THE WEST

CHAPTER I

THE NORTHWEST TERRITORY; OHIO, 1787–1790

SO far the work of the backwoodsmen in exploring, conquering, and holding the West had been work undertaken solely on individual initiative. The nation as a whole had not directly shared in it. The frontiersmen who chopped the first trails across the Alleghanies, who earliest wandered through the lonely western lands, and who first built stockaded hamlets on the banks of the Watauga, the Kentucky, and the Cumberland, acted each in consequence of his own restless eagerness for adventure and possible gain. The nation neither encouraged them to undertake the enterprises on which they embarked, nor protected them for the first few years of uncertain foothold in the new-won country. Only the backwoodsmen themselves felt the thirst for exploration of the unknown, the desire to try the untried,

which drove them hither and thither through the dim wilderness. The men who controlled the immediate destinies of the confederated commonwealths knew little of what lay in the forest-shrouded country beyond the mountains, until the backwoods explorers of their own motion penetrated its hidden and inmost fastnesses. Singly, or in groups, the daring hunters roved through the vast reaches of sombre woodland and pitched their camps on the banks of rushing rivers, nameless and unknown. In bands of varying size the hunter-settlers followed close behind, and built their cabins and blockhouses here and there in the great forest land. They elected their own military leaders, and waged war on their own account against their Indian foes. They constructed their own governmental systems, on their own motion, without assistance or interference from the parent States, until the settlements were firmly established and the work of civic organization well under way.

Of course, some help was ultimately given by the parent States; and the indirect assistance rendered by the nation had been great. The West could neither have been won nor held by the frontiersmen save for the backing given by the Thirteen States. England and Spain would have made short work of the men whose advance into the lands of their Indian allies they viewed with

such jealous hatred, had they not also been forced to deal with the generals and soldiers of the Continental army and the statesmen and diplomats of the Continental Congress. But the real work was done by the settlers themselves. The distinguishing feature in the exploration, settlement, and up-building of Kentucky and Tennessee was the individual initiative of the backwoodsmen.

The direct reverse of this was true of the settlement of the country northwest of the Ohio. Here, also, the enterprise, daring, and energy of the individual settlers were of the utmost consequence; the land could never have been won had not the incomers possessed these qualities in a very high degree. But the settlements sprang directly from the action of the Federal Government, and the first and most important of them would not have been undertaken save for that action. The settlers were not the first comers in the wilderness they cleared and tilled. They did not themselves form the armies which met and overthrew the Indians. The regular forces led the way in the country north of the Ohio. The Federal forts were built first; it was only afterwards that the small towns sprang up in their shadow. The Federal troops formed the vanguard of the white advance. They were the mainstay of the force behind which, as behind a shield, the founders of the commonwealths did their work.

Unquestionably many of the settlers did their full share in the fighting; and they and their descendants, on many a stricken field, and through many a long campaign, proved that no people stood above them in hardihood and courage; but the land on which they settled was won less by themselves than by the statesmen who met in the national capital, and the scarred soldiers who on the frontier upbore the national colors. Moreover, instead of being absolutely free to choose their own form of government and shape their own laws and social conditions untrammelled by restrictions, the Northwesterners were allowed to take the land only upon certain definite conditions. The National Government ceded to settlers part of its own domain, and provided the terms upon which States of the Union should afterwards be made out of this domain; and with a wisdom and love of righteousness which have been of incalculable consequence to the whole nation, it stipulated that slavery should never exist in the States thus formed. This condition alone profoundly affected the whole development of the Northwest, and sundered it by a sharp line from those portions of the new country which, for their own ill fortune, were left free from all restriction of the kind. The Northwest owes its life and owes its abounding strength and vigorous growth to the action of the nation as a whole. It

was founded not by individual Americans, but by the United States of America. The mighty and populous commonwealths that lie north of the Ohio and in the valley of the upper Mississippi are in a peculiar sense the children of the National Government, and it is no mere accident that has made them in return the especial guardians and protectors of that government; for they form the heart of the nation.

Before the Continental Congress took definite action concerning the Northwest, there had been settlements within its borders, but these settlements were unauthorized and illegal, and had little or no effect upon the aftergrowth of the region. Wild and lawless adventurers had built cabins and made tomahawk claims on the west bank of the upper Ohio. They lived in angry terror of the Indians, and they also had cause to dread the regular army; for wherever the troops discovered their cabins, they tore them down, destroyed the improvements, and drove off the sullen and threatening squatters. As the tide of settlement increased in the neighboring country these trespassers on the Indian lands and on the national domain became more numerous. Many were driven off, again and again; but here and there one kept his foothold. It was these scattered few successful ones who were the first permanent settlers in the present State of Ohio,

coming in about the same time that the forts of the regular troops were built. They formed no organized society, and their presence was of no importance whatever in the history of the State.

The American settlers who had come in round the French villages on the Wabash and the Illinois were of more consequence. In 1787, the adult males among these American settlers numbered 240, as against 1040 French of the same class.[1] They had followed in the track of Clark's victorious march. They had taken up land, sometimes as mere squatters, sometimes under color of title obtained from the French courts which Clark and Todd had organized under what they conceived to be the authority of Virginia. They were for the most part rough, enterprising men; and while some of them behaved well, others proved very disorderly and gave much trouble to the French; so that both the creoles and the Indians became exasperated with them and put them in serious jeopardy just before Clark undertook his expedition in the fall of 1786.

The creoles had suffered much from the general misrule and anarchy in their country, and from the disorderly conduct of some of the American

[1] State Department MSS., No. 48, p. 165. Of adult males there were among the French 520 at Vincennes, 191 at Kaskaskia, 239 at Cahokia, 11 at St. Philippe, and 78 at Prairie du Rocher. The American adult males numbered 103 at Vincennes and 137 in the Illinois.

settlers, and of not a few of the ragged volunteer soldiery as well. They hailed with sincere joy the advent of the disciplined Continental troops, commanded by officers who behaved with rigid justice towards all men and put down disorder with a strong hand. They were much relieved to find themselves under the authority of Congress, and both to that body and to the local regular army officers they sent petitions setting forth their grievances and hopes. In one petition to Congress they recited at length the wrongs done them, dwelling especially upon the fact that they had gladly furnished the garrison established among them with peltries and provisions of every kind, for which they had never received a dollar's payment. They remarked that the stores seemed to disappear in a way truly marvellous, leaving the backwoods soldiers who were to have benefited by them "as ragged as ever." The petitioners complained that the undisciplined militia quartered among them, who on their arrival were "in the most shabby and wretched state," and who had "rioted in abundance and unaccustomed luxury" at the expense of the creoles, had also maltreated and insulted them; as, for instance, they had at times wantonly shot the cattle merely to try their rifles. "Ours was the task of hewing and carting them firewood to the barracks," continued the petition, complaining of the way the Virginians

had imposed on the submissiveness and docility of the inhabitants, "ours the drudgery of raising vegetables which we did not eat, poultry for their kitchen, cattle for the diversion of their marksmen."

The petitioners further asked that every man among them should be granted five hundred acres. They explained that formerly they had set no value on the land, occupying themselves chiefly with the Indian trade, and raising only the crops they absolutely needed for food; but that now they realized the worth of the soil, and inasmuch as they had various titles to it, under lost or forgotten charters from the French kings, they would surrender all the rights these titles conveyed, save only what belonged to the church of Cahokia, in return for the above-named grant of five hundred acres to each individual.[1]

The memorialists alluded to their explanation of the fact that they had lost all the title-deeds to the land, that is all the old charters granted them, as "ingenious and candid"; and so it was.

[1] State Department MSS., No. 48. "Memorial of the French Inhabitants of Post Vincennes, Kaskaskia, La Prairie du Rocher, Cahokia, and Village of St. Philip to Congress." By Bartholomew Tardiveau, agent. New York, February 26, 1788. Tardiveau was a French mercantile adventurer, who had relations with Gardoqui and the Kentucky separatists, and in a petition presented by him it is not easy to discriminate between the views that are really those of the creoles, and the views which he deemed it for his own advantage to have expressed.

The immense importance of having lost all proof of their rights did not strike them. There was an almost pathetic childishness in the request that the United States authorities should accept oral tradition in lieu of the testimony of the lost charters, and in the way they dwelt with a kind of humble pride upon their own "submissiveness and docility." In the same spirit, the inhabitants of Vincennes surrendered their charter, remarking "accustomed to mediocrity, we do not wish for wealth but for mere competency." [1] Of course, the "submissiveness" and the lightheartedness of the French did not prevent their being also fickle; and their "docility" was varied by fits of violent quarrelling with their American neighbors and among themselves. But the quarrels of the creoles were those of children, compared with the ferocious feuds of the Americans.

Sometimes the trouble was of a religious nature. The priest at Vincennes, for instance, bitterly assailed the priest at Cahokia, because he married a Catholic to a Protestant; while all the people of the Cahokia church stoutly supported their pastor in what he had done.[2] This Catholic priest was Clark's old friend, Gibault. He was suffering from poverty, due to his loyal friendship to the Americans; for he had advanced Clark's troops

[1] State Department MSS., No. 48, July 26, 1787.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 85.

both goods and peltries, for which he had never received payment. In a petition to Congress, he showed how this failure to repay him had reduced him to want, and had forced him to sell his two slaves, who otherwise would have kept and tended him in his old age.[1]

The Federal General, Harmar, in the fall of 1787, took formal possession, in person, of Vincennes and the Illinois towns; and he commented upon the good behavior of the creoles and their respect for the United States Government, and laid stress upon the fact that they were entirely unacquainted with what the Americans called liberty, and could best be governed in the manner to which they were accustomed—"by a commandant with a few troops." [2]

The American pioneers, on the contrary, were of all people the least suited to be governed by a commandant with troops. They were much better stuff out of which to make a free, self-governing nation, and they were much better able to hold their own in the world and to shape their own destiny; but they were far less pleasant people to govern. To this day the very virtues of the pioneers—not to speak of their faults—make

[1] *American State Papers*, Public Lands, i., Gibault's "Memorial," May 1, 1790.

[2] *St. Clair Papers*, Harmar's Letters, August 7 and November 24, 1787.

it almost impossible for them to get on with an ordinary army officer, accustomed as he is to rule absolutely, though justly and with a sort of severe kindness. Army officers on the frontier—especially when put in charge of Indian reservations or of French or Spanish communities—have almost always been more or less at swords'-points with the stubborn, cross-grained pioneers. The borderers are usually as suspicious as they are independent, and their self-sufficiency and self-reliance often degenerate into mere lawlessness and defiance of all restraint.

The Federal officers in the backwoods north of the Ohio got on badly with the backwoodsmen. Harmar took the side of the French creoles and warmly denounced the acts of the frontiersmen who had come in among them.[1] In his letter to the creoles he alluded to Clark's Vincennes garrison as "a set of lawless banditti," and explained that his own troops were regulars, who would treat with justice both the French and Indians. Harmar never made much effort to conceal his dislike of the borderers. In one letter he alludes to a Delaware chief as "a manly old fellow, and much more of a gentleman than the generality of these frontier people."[2] Naturally, there was

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. ii., Harmar to Legrace and Busseron, June 29, 1787.

[2] *Ibid.*, Harmar to the Secretary of War, March 9, 1788.

little love lost between the bitterly prejudiced old army officer, fixed and rigid in all his ideas, and the equally prejudiced backwoodsmen, whose ways of looking at almost all questions were antipodal to his.

The creoles of the Illinois and Vincennes sent warm letters of welcome to Harmar. The American settlers addressed him in an equally respectful but very different tone, for, they said, their hearts were filled with "anxiety, gloominess, and dismay." They explained the alarm they felt at the report that they were to be driven out of the country, and protested—what was doubtless true—that they had settled on the land in entire good faith and with the assent of the French inhabitants. The latter themselves bore testimony to the good faith and good behavior of many of the settlers, and petitioned that these should not be molested,[1] explaining that the French had been benefited by their industry, and had preserved a peaceable and friendly intercourse with them. In the end, while the French villagers were left undisturbed in their ancient privileges, and while they were granted or were confirmed in the possession of the land immediately around them, the

[1] State Department MSS. 150: Address of American Inhabitants of Vincennes, August 4, 1787; Recommendation by French Inhabitants in Favor of American Inhabitants, August 2d; letter of Le Chamy and others, Kaskaskia, August 25th; letter of J. M. P. Legrace, June 25th.

Americans and the French who chose to go outside the village grants were given merely the rights of other settlers.

The Continental officers exchanged courtesies with the Spanish commandants of the creole villages on the west bank of the Mississippi, but kept a sharp eye on them, as these commandants endeavored to persuade all the French inhabitants to move west of the river by offering them free grants of land.

But all these matters were really of small consequence. The woes of the creoles, the trials of the American squatters, the friction between the regular officers and the backwoodsmen, and jealousy felt by both for the Spaniards—all these were of little real moment at this period of the history of the Northwest. The vital point in its history was the passage by Congress of the Ordinance of 1787, and the doings of the various land companies under and in consequence of this ordinance.

The wide gap between the ways in which the Northwest and Southwest were settled is made plain by such a statement. In the Northwest it was the action of Congress, the action of the representatives of the nation acting as a whole, which was all-important. In the Southwest no action of Congress was of any importance when compared with the voluntary movements of the

[1] Hamtranck to Harmar, October 13, 1788.

backwoodsmen themselves. In the Northwest it was the nation which acted. In the Southwest the determining factor was the individual initiative of the pioneers. The most striking feature in the settlement of the Southwest was the free play given to the workings of extreme individualism. The settlement of the Northwest represented the triumph of an intelligent collectivism, which yet allowed to each man a full measure of personal liberty.

Another difference of note was the difference in stock of the settlers. The Southwest was settled by the true backwoodsmen, the men who lived on their small clearings among the mountains of western Pennsylvania, Virginia, and North Carolina. The first settlement in Ohio, the settlement which had most effect upon the history of the Northwest and which largely gave it its peculiar trend, was the work of New Englanders. There was already a considerable population in New England; but the rugged farmers with their swarming families had to fill up large waste spaces in Maine and in northern New Hampshire and Vermont, and there was a very marked movement among them towards New York, and especially into the Mohawk valley, all west of which was yet a wilderness. In consequence, during the years immediately succeeding the close of the Revolutionary War, the New England emigrants

made their homes in those stretches of wilderness which were nearby, and did not appear on the western border. But there had always been enterprising individuals among them desirous of seeking a more fertile soil in the far West or South, and even before the Revolution some of these men ventured to Louisiana itself to pick out a good country in which to form a colony. After the close of the war the fame of the lands along the Ohio was spread abroad; and the men who wished to form companies for the purposes of adventurous settlement began to turn their eyes thither.

The first question to decide was the ownership of the wished-for country. This decision had to be made in Congress by agreement among the representatives of the different States. Seven States—Massachusetts, Connecticut, New York, Virginia, Georgia, and both Carolinas—claimed portions of the western lands. New York's claim was based with entire solemnity on the ground that she was the heir of the Iroquois tribes, and therefore inherited all the wide regions overrun by their terrible war bands. The other six States based their claims on various charters, which in reality conferred rights not one whit more substantial.

These different claims were not of a kind to which any outside power would have paid heed. Their usefulness came in when the States bar-

gained among themselves. In the bargaining, both among the claimant States and between the claimant and the non-claimant States, the charter titles were treated as of importance, and substantial concessions were exacted in return for their surrender. But their value was really inchoate until the land was reduced to possession by some act of the States or the nation.

At the close of the Revolutionary War there existed wide differences between the various States as to the actual ownership and possession of the lands they claimed. Virginia and North Carolina were the only two which had reduced to some kind of occupation a large part of the territory to which they asserted title. Their backwoodsmen had settled in the lands so that they already held a certain population. Moreover, these same backwoodsmen, organized as part of the militia of the parent States, had made good their claim by successful warfare. The laws of the two States were executed by State officials in communities scattered over much of the country claimed. The soldier-settlers of Virginia and North Carolina had actually built houses and forts, tilled the soil, and exercised the functions of civil government on the banks of the Wabash and the Ohio, the Mississippi, the Cumberland, and the Tennessee. Counties and districts had been erected by the two States on the western

waters; and representatives of the civil divisions thus constituted sat in the State legislatures. The claims of Virginia and North Carolina to much of the territory had behind them the substantial element of armed possession. The settlement and conquest of the lands had been achieved without direct intervention by the Federal Government; though, of course, it was only the ultimate success of the nation in its contest with the foreign foe that gave the settlement and conquest any value.

As much could not be said for the claims of the other States. South Carolina's claim was to a mere ribbon of land south of the North Carolina territory, and need not be considered; it was ceded to the Government about the time the Northwest was organized.[1] Georgia asserted that her boundaries extended due west of the Mississippi and that all between was hers. But the entire western portion of the territory was actually held by the Spaniards and by the Indian tribes tributary to the Spaniards. No subjects of Georgia lived on it, or were allowed to live on it. The few white inhabitants were subjects of the King of Spain, and lived under Spanish law; the Creeks and Choctaws were his subsidized allies, and he held the country by right of conquest.

[1] For an account of this cession, see Mr. Garrett's excellent paper in the publications of the Tennessee Historical Society.

Georgia, a weak and turbulent, though a growing State, was powerless to enforce her claims. Most of the territory to which she asserted title did not in truth become part of the United States until Pinckney's treaty went into effect. It was the United States and not Georgia that actually won and held the land in dispute; and it was a discredit to Georgia's patriotism that she so long wrangled about it, and ultimately drove so hard a bargain concerning it with the National Government.

There was a similar state of affairs in the far Northwest. No New Yorkers lived in the region bounded by the shadowy and wavering lines of the Iroquois conquests. The lands claimed under ancient charters by Massachusetts and Connecticut were occupied by the British and their Indian allies, who held adverse possession. Not a single New England settler lived in them; no New England law had any force in them; no New England soldier had gone or could go thither. They were won by the victory of Wayne and the treaty of Jay. If Massachusetts and Connecticut had stood alone, the lands would never have been yielded to them at all; they could not have enforced their claim, and it would have been scornfully disregarded. The region was won for the United States by the arms and diplomacy of the United States. Whatever of reality there was in the titles of Massachusetts and Connecticut came

from the existence and actions of the Federal Union. [1]

All the States that did not claim lands beyond the mountains were strenuous in belittling the claims of those that did, and insisted that the title to the western territory should be vested in the Union. Not even the danger from the British armies could keep this question in abeyance, and while the war was at its height the States were engaged in bitter wrangles over the subject; for the weakness of the Federal tie rendered it always probable that the different members of the Union would sulk or quarrel with one another rather than oppose an energetic resistance to the foreign foe. At different times different non-claimant States took the lead in pushing the various

[1] For this northwestern history, see *The Life, Journal, and Correspondence of Manasseh Cutler*, by William Parker Cutler and Julia Perkins Cutler; *The St. Clair Papers*, by W. H. Smith; *The Old Northwest*, by B. A. Hinsdale; *Maryland's Influence upon Land Cessions*, by Herbert Adams. See also Donaldson's *Public Domain*, Hildreth's *History of Washington County*, and the various articles by Poole and others. In Professor Hinsdale's excellent book, on p. 200, is a map of the "Territory of the Thirteen Original States in 1783." This map is accurate enough for Virginia and North Carolina; but the lands in the west put down as belonging to Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Georgia, did not really belong to them at all in 1783; they were held by the British and Spaniards, and were ultimately surrendered to the United States, not to individual States. These States did not surrender the land; they merely surrendered a disputed title to the lands.

schemes for nationalizing the western lands; but Maryland was the first to take action in this direction, and was the most determined in pressing the matter to a successful issue. She showed the greatest hesitation in joining the Confederation at all while the matter was allowed to rest unsettled; and insisted that the titles of the claimant States were void, that there was no need of asking them to cede what they did not possess, and that the West should be declared outright to be part of the Federal domain.

Maryland was largely actuated by fear of her neighbor Virginia. Virginia's claims were the most considerable, and if they had all been allowed hers would have been indeed an empire. Maryland's fears were twofold. She dreaded the mere growth of Virginia in wealth, power, and population in the first place; and in the second she feared lest her own population might be drained into these vacant lands, thereby at once diminishing her own, and building up her neighbor's, importance. Each State, at that time, had to look upon its neighbors as probable commercial rivals and possible armed enemies. This is a feeling which we now find difficulty in understanding. At present no State in the Union fears the growth of a neighbor, or would ever dream of trying to check that growth. The direct reverse was the case during and after the Revolu-

tion; for the jealousy and distrust which the different States felt for one another were bitter to a degree.

The Continental Congress was more than once at its wits' ends in striving to prevent an open break over the land question between the more extreme States on the two sides. The wisest and coolest leaders saw that the matter could never be determined on a mere consideration of the abstract rights, or even of the equities, of the case. They saw that it would have to be decided, as almost all political questions of great importance must be decided, by compromise and concession. The foremost statesmen of the Revolution were eminently practical politicians. They had high ideals and they strove to realize them, as near as might be; otherwise they would have been neither patriots nor statesmen. But they were not theorists. They were men of affairs, accustomed to deal with other men; and they understood that few questions of real moment can be decided on their merits alone. Such questions must be dealt with on the principle of getting the greatest possible amount of ultimate good, and of surrendering in return whatever must be surrendered in order to attain this good. There was no use in learned arguments to show that Maryland's position was the proper one for a far-sighted American patriot, or that Virginia and North Carolina had

more basis for their claims than Connecticut or Georgia. What had to be done was to appeal to the love of country and shrewd common-sense of the people in the different States, and persuade them each to surrender on certain points, so that all could come to a common agreement.

New York's claim was the least defensible of all, but, on the other hand, New York led the way in vesting whatever title she might have in the Federal Government. In 1780, she gave proof of the growth of the national idea among her citizens by abandoning all her claim to western lands in favor of the Union. Congress used this surrender as an argument by which to move the other States to action. It issued an earnest appeal to them to follow New York's example without regard to the value of their titles, so that the Federal Union might be put on a firm basis. Congress did not discuss its own rights, nor the rights of the States; it simply asked that the cessions be made as a matter of expediency and patriotism; and announced that the policy of the Government would be to divide this new territory into districts of suitable size, which should be admitted as States as soon as they became well settled. This last proposition was important, as it outlined the future policy of the Government, which was to admit the new communities as States, with all the rights of the old States, instead of treating them

as subordinate and dependent, after the manner of the European colonial systems.

Maryland then joined the Confederation in 1781. Virginia and Connecticut had offered to cede their claims, but under such conditions that it was impossible to close with the offers. Congress accepted the New York cession gratefully, with an eye to the effect on the other States; but for some time no progress was made in the negotiations with the latter. Finally, early in 1784, the bargain with Virginia was consummated. She ceded to Congress her rights to the territory northwest of the Ohio, except a certain amount retained as a military reserve for the use of her soldiers, while Congress tacitly agreed not to question her right to Kentucky. A year later Massachusetts followed suit, and ceded to Congress her title to all the lands lying west of the present western boundary of New York State. Finally, in 1786, a similar cession was made by Connecticut. But Connecticut's action was not much more patriotic or less selfish than Georgia's. Throughout the controversy she showed a keen desire to extract from Congress all that could possibly be obtained, and to delay action as long as might be; though, like Georgia, Connecticut could by right claim nothing that was not in reality obtained for the Union by the Union itself. She made her grant conditionally upon being

allowed to reserve for her own profit about five thousand square miles in what is now northern Ohio. This tract was afterwards known as the Western Reserve. Congress was very reluctant to accept such a cession, with its greedy offset, but there was no wise alternative and the bargain was finally struck.

The non-claimant States had attained their object, and yet it had been obtained in a manner that left the claimant States satisfied. The project for which Maryland had contended was realized, with the difference that Congress accepted the Northwest as a gift coupled with conditions, instead of taking it as an unconditional right. The lands became part of the Federal domain, and were nationalized so far as they could be under the Confederation; but there was no national treasury into which to turn the proceeds from the sale until the Constitution was adopted.[1]

Having got possession of the land, Congress proceeded to arrange for its disposition, even before providing the outline of the governmental system for the States that might grow up therein. Congress regarded the territory as forming a treasury chest, and was anxious to sell the land in lots, whether to individuals or to companies. In 1785, it passed an ordinance of singular wis-

[1] Hinsdale, 250.

dom, which has been the basis of all our subsequent legislation on the subject.

This ordinance was another proof of the way in which the nation applied its collective power to the subdual and government of the Northwest, instead of leaving the whole matter to the working of unrestricted individualism, as in the Southwest. The pernicious system of acquiring title to public lands in vogue among the Virginians and North Carolinians was abandoned. Instead of making each man survey his own land and allowing him to survey it when, how, and where he pleased, with the certainty of producing endless litigation and trouble, Congress provided for a corps of government surveyors, who were to go about this work systematically. It provided further for a known base line, and then for division of the country into ranges of townships six miles square, and for the subdivision of these townships into lots ("sections") of one square mile—six hundred and forty acres—each. The ranges, townships, and sections were duly numbered. The basis for the whole system of public education in the Northwest was laid by providing that in every township lot No. 16 should be reserved for the maintenance of public schools therein. A minimum price of a dollar an acre was put on the land.

Congress hoped to find in these western lands

a source of great wealth. The hope was disappointed. The task of subduing the wilderness is not very remunerative. It yields a little more than a livelihood to men of energy, resolution, and bodily strength and address; but it does not yield enough for men to be able to pay heavily for the privilege of undertaking the labor. Throughout our history the pioneer has found that by taking up wild land at a low cost he can make a rough living, and keep his family fed, clothed, and housed; but it is only by very hard work that he can lay anything by or materially better his condition. Of course, the few very successful do much more, and the unsuccessful do even less; but the average pioneer can just manage to keep continually forging a little ahead in matters material and financial. Under such conditions a high price cannot be obtained for public lands; and when they are sold, as they must be, at a low price, the receipts do little more than offset the necessary outlay. The truth is, that people have a very misty idea as to the worth of wild lands. Even when the soil is rich they only possess the capacity of acquiring value under labor. All their value arises from the labor done on them or in their neighborhood, except that it depends also upon the amount of labor which must necessarily be expended in transportation.

It is the fashion to speak of the immense oppor-

tunity offered to any race by a virgin continent. In one sense the opportunity is indeed great; but in another sense it is not, for the chance of failure is very great also. It is an opportunity of which advantage can be taken only at the cost of much hardship and much grinding toil.

It remained for Congress to determine the conditions under which the settlers could enter the new land, and under which new States should spring up therein. These conditions were fixed by the famous Ordinance of 1787; one of the two or three most important acts ever passed by an American legislative body, for it determined that the new northwestern States—the children, and the ultimate leaders, of the Union—should get their growth as free commonwealths, untainted by the horrible curse of negro slavery.

Several ordinances for the government of the Northwest were introduced and carried through Congress in 1784–1786, but they were never put into operation. In 1784, Jefferson put into his draft of the ordinance of that year a clause prohibiting slavery in all the western territory, south as well as north of the Ohio River, after the beginning of the year 1801. This clause was struck out; and even if adopted it would probably have amounted to nothing, for if slavery had been permitted to take firm root it could hardly have been torn up. In 1785, Rufus King advanced a

proposition to prohibit all slavery in the Northwest immediately, but Congress never acted on the proposal.

The next movement in the same direction was successful, because when it was made it was pushed by a body of well-known men who were anxious to buy the lands that Congress was anxious to sell, but who would not buy them until they had some assurance that the governmental system under which they were to live would meet their ideas. This body was composed of New Englanders, mostly veterans of the Revolutionary War, and led by officers who had stood well in the Continental army.

When, in the fall of 1783, the Continental army was disbanded, the war-worn and victorious soldiers, who had at last wrung victory from the reluctant years of defeat, found themselves fronting grim penury. Some were worn with wounds and sickness; all were poor and unpaid; and Congress had no means to pay them. Many among them felt that they had small chance to repair their broken fortunes if they returned to the homes they had abandoned seven weary years before, when the guns of the minute-men first called them to battle.

These heroes of the blue and buff turned their eyes westward to the fertile lands lying beyond the mountains. They petitioned Congress to

mark out a territory, in what is now the State of Ohio, as the seat of a distinct colony, in time to become one of the confederated States; and they asked that their bounty lands should be set off for them in this territory. Two hundred and eighty-five officers of the Continental line joined in this petition; one hundred and fifty-five, over half, were from Massachusetts, the State which had furnished more troops than any other to the Revolutionary armies. The remainder were from Connecticut, New Hampshire, New Jersey, and Maryland.

The signers of this petition desired to change the paper obligations of Congress, which they held, into fertile wild lands which they should themselves subdue by their labor; and out of these wild lands they proposed to make a new State. These two germ ideas remained in their minds, even though their petition bore no fruit. They kept before their eyes the plan of a company to undertake the work, after getting the proper cession from Congress. Finally, in the early spring of 1786, some of the New England officers met at the "Bunch of Grapes" tavern in Boston and organized the Ohio Company of Associates. They at once sent one of their number as a delegate to New York, where the Continental Congress was in session, to lay their memorial before that body.

Congress was considering another ordinance for the government of the Northwest when the memorial was presented, and the former was delayed until the latter could be considered by the committee to which it had been referred. In July, Dr. Manasseh Cutler, of Ipswich, Massachusetts, arrived as a second delegate to look after the interests of the company. He and they were as much concerned in the terms of the governmental ordinance as in the conditions on which the land grant was to be made. The orderly, liberty-loving, keen-minded New Englanders who formed the company, would not go to a land where the form of government was hostile to their ideas of righteousness and sound public policy.

The one point of difficulty was the slavery question. Only eight States were at the time represented in the Congress; these were Massachusetts, New York, New Jersey, Delaware, Virginia, North and South Carolina, and Georgia — thus five of the eight States were southern. But the Federal Congress rose in this, almost its last act, to a lofty pitch of patriotism; and the Southern States showed a marked absence of sectional feeling in the matter. Indeed, Cutler found that though he was a New England man, with a New England company behind him, many of the eastern people looked rather coldly at his scheme, fearing lest the settlement of the West might mean a rapid drain-

age of population from the East. Nathan Dane, a Massachusetts delegate, favored it, in part because he hoped that planting such a colony in the West might keep at least that part of it true to "Eastern politics." The southern members, on the other hand, heartily supported the plan. The committee that brought in the ordinance, the majority being southern men, also reported an article prohibiting slavery. Dane was the mover, while the rough draft may have been written by Cutler; and the report was vigorously pushed by the two Virginians on the committee, William Grayson and Richard Henry Lee. The article was adopted by a vote unanimous, except for the dissent of one delegate, a nobody from New York.

The ordinance established a territorial government, with a governor, secretary, and judges. A General Assembly was authorized as soon as there should be five thousand free male inhabitants in the district. The lower house was elective, the upper house, or council, was appointive. The Legislature was to elect a territorial delegate to Congress. The governor was required to own a freehold of one thousand acres in the district, a judge five hundred, and a representative two hundred; and no man was allowed to vote unless he possessed a freehold of fifty acres.[1] These

[1] *St. Clair Papers*, ii., 603.

provisions would seem strangely undemocratic if applied to a similar territory in our own day.

The all-important features of the ordinance were contained in the six articles of compact between the confederated States and the people and states of the territory, to be forever unalterable, save by the consent of both parties. The first guaranteed complete freedom of worship and religious belief to all peaceable and orderly persons. The second provided for trial by jury, the writ of habeas corpus, the privileges of the common law, and the right of proportional legislative representation. The third enjoined that faith should be kept with the Indians, and provided that "schools and the means of education" should forever be encouraged, inasmuch as "religion, morality, and knowledge" were necessary to good government. The fourth ordained that the new States formed in the Northwest should forever form part of the United States and be subject to the laws as were the others. The fifth provided for the formation and admission of not less than three or more than five states, formed out of this northwestern territory, whenever such a putative state should contain sixty thousand inhabitants; the form of government to be republican, and the state, when created, to stand on an equal footing with all the other States.

The sixth and most important article declared

that there should never be slavery or involuntary servitude in the Northwest, otherwise than for the punishment of convicted criminals, provided, however, that fugitive slaves from the older States might lawfully be reclaimed by their owners. This was the greatest blow struck for freedom and against slavery in all our history, save only Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation, for it determined that in the final struggle the mighty West should side with the right against the wrong. It was in its results a deadly stroke against the traffic in, and ownership of, human beings, and the blow was dealt by southern men, to whom all honor should ever be given.

This anti-slavery compact was the most important feature of the ordinance, yet there were many other features only less important.

In truth, the Ordinance of 1787 was so wide-reaching in its effects, was drawn in accordance with so lofty a morality and such far-seeing statesmanship, and was fraught with such weal for the nation, that it will ever rank among the foremost of American state papers, coming in that little group which includes the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, Washington's Farewell Address, and Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation and Second Inaugural. It marked out a definite line of orderly freedom along which the new States were to advance. It laid deep the

tion. Hitherto every new colony had either been subject to the parent State, or independent of it. England, Holland, France, and Spain, when they founded colonies beyond the sea, founded them for the good of the parent State and governed them as dependencies. The home country might treat her colonies well or ill, she might cherish and guard them, or oppress them with harshness and severity, but she never treated them as equals. Russia, in pushing her obscure and barbarous conquest and colonization of Siberia,—a conquest destined to be of such lasting importance in the history of Asia,—pursued precisely the same course.

In fact, this had been the only kind of colonization known to modern Europe. In the ancient world it had also been known, and it was only through it that great empires grew. Each Roman colony that settled in Gaul or Iberia founded a city or established a province which was tributary to Rome, instead of standing on a footing of equality in the same nation with Rome. But the other great colonizing peoples of antiquity,—the Greeks and Phœnicians—spread in an entirely different way. Each of their colonies became absolutely independent of the country whence it sprang. Carthage and Syracuse were as free as Tyre or Sidon, as Corinth or Athens. Thus under the Roman method the empire grew, at the cost

of the colonies losing their independence. Under the Greek and Carthaginian method the colonies acquired the same freedom that was enjoyed by the mother cities; but there was no extension of empire, no growth of a great and enduring nationality. The modern European nations had followed the Roman system. Until the United States sprang into being every great colonizing people followed one system or the other.

The American Republic, taking advantage of its fortunate federal features and of its strong Central Government, boldly struck out on a new path, which secured the freedom-giving properties of the Greek method, while preserving national union as carefully as it was preserved by the Roman empire. New States were created, which stood on exactly the same footing as the old; and yet these new States formed integral and inseparable parts of a great and rapidly growing nation. This movement was original with the American Republic; she was dealing with new conditions, and on this point the history of England merely taught her what to avoid. The English colonies were subject to the British Crown, and therefore to Great Britain. The new American States, themselves colonies in the old Greek sense, were subject only to a government which they helped administer on equal terms with the old States. No State was subject to another, new or old. All

paid a common allegiance to a central power which was identical with none.

The absolute novelty of this feature, as the world then stood, fails to impress us now because we are so used to it. But it was at that time without precedent; and though since then the idea has made rapid progress, there seems in most cases to have been very great difficulty in applying it in practice. The Spanish-American states proved wholly unable to apply it at all. In Australia and South Africa all that can be said is that events now apparently show a trend in the direction of adopting this system. At present all these British colonies, as regards one another, are independent but disunited; as regards the mother country, they remain united with her, but in the condition of dependencies.

The vital feature of the ordinance was the prohibition of slavery. This prohibition was not retroactive; the slaves of the French villagers, and of the few American slaveholders who had already settled round them, were not disturbed in their condition. But all further importation of slaves, and the holding in slavery of any not already slaves, were prohibited. The prohibition was brought about by the action of the Ohio Company. Without the prohibition the company would probably not have undertaken its experiment in colonization; and save for the pressure of

the company slavery would hardly have been abolished. Congress wished to sell the lands, and was much impressed by the solid worth of the founders of the association. The New Englanders were anxious to buy the lands, but were earnest in their determination to exclude slavery from the new territory. The slave question was not at the time a burning issue between North and South; for no Northerner thought of crusading to destroy the evil, while most enlightened Southerners were fond of planning how to do away with it. The tact of the company's representative before Congress, Dr. Cutler, did the rest. A compromise was agreed to; for, like so many other great political triumphs, the passage of the Ordinance of 1787 was a compromise. Slavery was prohibited on the one hand; and on the other, that the territory might not become a refuge for runaway negroes, provision was made for the return of such fugitives. The popular conscience was yet too dull about slavery to be stirred by the thought of returning fugitive slaves into bondage.

A fortnight after the passage of the ordinance, the transaction was completed by the sale of a million and a half acres, north of the Ohio, to the Ohio Company. Three million and a half more, known as the Scioto purchase, were authorized to be sold to a purely speculative company, but the speculation ended in nothing save financial disas-

ter. The price was nominally seventy cents an acre; but as payment was made in depreciated public securities, the real price was only eight or nine cents an acre. The sale illustrated the tendency of Congress at that time to sell the land in large tracts; a most unwholesome tendency, fruitful of evil to the whole community. It was only by degrees that the wisdom of selling the land in small plots, and to actual occupiers, was recognized.

Together with the many wise and tolerant measures included in the famous Ordinance of 1787, and in the land Ordinance of 1785, there were one or two which represented the feelings of the past, not the future. One of them was a regulation which reserved a lot in every township to be given for the purposes of religion. Nowadays, and rightfully, we regard as peculiarly American the complete severance of Church and State, and refuse to allow the State to contribute in any way towards the support of any sect.

A regulation of a very different kind provided that two townships should be set apart to endow a university. These two townships now endow the University of Ohio, placed in a town which, with queer poverty of imagination and fatuous absence of humor, has been given the name of Athens.

The company was well organized, the founders

showing the invaluable New England aptitude for business, and there was no delay in getting the settlement started. After some deliberation the lands lying along the Ohio, on both sides of, but mainly below, the Muskingum, were chosen for the site of the new colony. There was some delay in making the payments subsequent to the first, and only a million and some odd acres were patented. One of the reasons for choosing the mouth of the Muskingum as the site for the town was the neighborhood of Fort Harmar, with its strong Federal garrison, and the spot was but a short distance beyond the line of already existing settlement.

As soon as enough of the would-be settlers were ready, they pushed forward in parties towards the headwaters of the Ohio, struggling along the winter-bound roads of western Pennsylvania. In January and February they began to reach the banks of the Youghiogheny, and set about building boats to launch when the river opened. There were forty-eight settlers in all who started downstream, their leader being General Rufus Putnam. He was a tried and gallant soldier, who had served with honor not only in the Revolutionary armies, but in the war which crushed the French power in America. On April 7, 1788, he stepped from his boat, which he had very appropriately named the *Mayflower*, on to the bank of the Muskingum.

The settlers immediately set to work felling trees, building log-houses and a stockade, clearing fields, and laying out the ground-plan of Marietta; for they christened the new town after the French queen, Marie Antoinette.[1] It was laid out in the untenanted wilderness; yet nearby was the proof that ages ago the wilderness had been tenanted, for close at hand were huge embankments, marking the site of a town of the long-vanished mound-builders. Giant trees grew on the mounds; all vestiges of the builders had vanished, and the solemn forest had closed above every remembrance of their fate.

The day of the landing of these new pilgrims was a day big with fate not only for the Northwest, but for the nation. It marked the beginning of the orderly and national conquest of the lands that now form the heart of the Republic. It marked the advent among the pioneers of a new element, which was to leave the impress of its strong personality deeply graven on the institutions and the people of the great States north of the Ohio—an element which in the end turned their development in the direction towards which

[1] *St. Clair Papers*, i., 139. It was at the beginning of the dreadful pseudo-classic cult in our intellectual history, and these honest soldiers and yeomen, with much self-complacency, gave to portions of their little raw town such ludicrously inappropriate names as the Campus Martius and Via Sacra.

the parent stock inclined in its home on the North Atlantic seaboard. The new settlers were almost all soldiers of the Revolutionary armies; they were hard-working, orderly men of trained courage and of keen intellect. An outside observer speaks of them as being the best informed, the most courteous and industrious, and the most law-abiding of all the settlers who had come to the frontier, while their leaders were men of a higher type than was elsewhere to be found in the West.[1] No better material for founding a new State existed anywhere. With such a foundation the State was little likely to plunge into the perilous abysses of anarchic license or of separatism and disunion. Moreover, to plant a settlement of this kind on the edge of the Indian-haunted wilderness showed that the founders possessed both hardihood and resolution.

Yet it must not be forgotten that the daring needed for the performance of this particular deed can in no way be compared with that shown by the real pioneers—the early explorers and Indian fighters. The very fact that the settlement around Marietta was national in its character, that it was the outcome of national legislation, and was undertaken under national protection, made the work of the individual settler count for less in the scale. The founders and managers of the Ohio

[1] Denny's "Military Journal," May 28 and June 15, 1789.

Company and the statesmen of the Federal Congress deserve much of the praise that in the Southwest would have fallen to the individual settlers only. The credit to be given to the nation in its collective capacity was greatly increased, and that due to the individual was correspondingly diminished.

Rufus Putnam and his fellow New Englanders built their new town under the guns of a Federal fort, only just beyond the existing boundary of settlement, and on land guaranteed them by the Federal Government. The dangers they ran and the hardships they suffered in no wise approached those undergone and overcome by the iron-willed, iron-limbed hunters who first built their lonely cabins on the Cumberland and Kentucky. The founders of Marietta trusted largely to the Federal troops for protection and were within easy reach of the settled country; but the wild woodwanderers who first roamed through the fair lands south of the Ohio built their little towns in the heart of the wilderness, many scores of leagues from all assistance, and trusted solely to their own long rifles in time of trouble. The settler of 1788 journeyed at ease over paths worn smooth by the feet of many thousands of predecessors; but the early pioneers cut their own trails in the untrodden wilderness, and warred single-handed against wild nature and wild man.

In the summer of 1788, Dr. Manasseh Cutler visited the colony he had helped to found and kept a diary of his journey. His trip through Pennsylvania was marked merely by such incidents as were common at that time on every journey in the United States away from the larger towns. He travelled with various companions, stopping at taverns and private houses; and both guests and hosts were fond of trying their skill with the rifle, either at a mark or at squirrels. In mid-August he reached Coxe's fort, on the Ohio, and came for the first time to the frontier proper. Here he embarked on a big flat-boat, with on board forty-eight souls all told, besides cattle. They drifted and paddled down-stream, and on the evening of the second day reached the Muskingum. Here and there along the Virginian shore the boat passed settlements, with grain-fields and orchards; the houses were sometimes squalid cabins, and sometimes roomy, comfortable buildings. When he reached the newly built town, he was greeted by General Putnam, who invited Cutler to share the marquee in which he lived; and that afternoon he drank tea with another New England general, one of the original founders.

The next three weeks he passed very comfortably with his friends, taking part in the various social entertainments, walking through the woods, and visiting one or two camps of friendly Indians

with all the curiosity of a pleasure-tourist. He greatly admired the large corn-fields, proof of the industry of the settlers. Some of the cabins were already comfortable; and many families of women and children had come out to join their husbands and fathers.

The newly appointed Governor of the territory, Arthur St. Clair, had reached the place in July, and formally assumed his task of government. Both Governor St. Clair and General Harmar were men of the old Federalist school, utterly unlike the ordinary borderers; and even in the wilderness they strove to keep a certain stateliness and formality in their surroundings. They speedily grew to feel at home with the New England leaders, who were gentlemen of much the same type as themselves, and had but little more in common with the ordinary frontier folk. Dr. Cutler frequently dined with one or other of them. After dining with the Governor at Fort Harmar, he pronounced it in his diary a "genteel dinner"; and he dwelt on the grapes, the beautiful garden, and the good looks of Mrs. Harmar. Sometimes the leading citizens gave a dinner to "His Excellency," as Dr. Cutler was careful to style the Governor, and to "General Harmar and his Lady." On such occasions the visitors were rowed from the fort to the town in a twelve-oared barge with an awning; the drilled crew rowed well, while a sergeant stood

in the stern to steer. On each oar blade was painted the word "Congress"; all the regular army men were devout believers in the Union. The dinners were handsomely served, with punch and wine; and at one Dr. Cutler records that fifty-five gentlemen sat down, together with three ladies. The fort itself was a square, with blockhouses, curtains, barracks, and artillery.

After three weeks' stay the Doctor started back, up-stream, in the boat of a well-to-do creole trader from the Illinois. This trader was no less a person than Francis Vigo, who had welcomed Clark when he took Kaskaskia, and who at that time rendered signal service to the Americans, advancing them peltries and goods. To the discredit of the nation be it said, he was never repaid what he had advanced. When Cutler joined him he was making his way up the Ohio in a big keel-boat, propelled by ten oars and a square-sail. The Doctor found his quarters pleasant; for there was an awning and a cabin, and Vigo was well-equipped with comforts and even luxuries. In his travelling chest he carried his silver-handled knives and forks, and flasks of spirits. The beds were luxurious for the frontier; in his journal the Doctor mentions that one night he had to sleep in "wet sheets." The average pioneer knew nothing whatever of sheets, wet or dry. Often the voyagers would get out and walk along shore, shooting

pigeons or squirrels and plucking bunches of grapes. On such occasions, if they had time, they would light a fire and have "a good dish of tea and a french fricassee." Once they saw some Indians; but the latter were merely chasing a bear, which they killed, giving the travellers some of the meat.

Cutler and his companions caught huge catfish in the river; they killed game of all kinds in the forest, and they lived very well indeed. In the morning they got under way early, after a "bitter and a biscuit," and a little later breakfasted on cold meat, pickles, cabbage, and pork. Between eleven and twelve they stopped for dinner—usually of hot venison or wild turkey, with a strong "dish of coffee" and loaf-sugar. At supper they had cold meat and tea. Here and there on the shore they passed settlers' cabins, where they obtained corn and milk, and sometimes eggs, butter, and veal. Cutler landed at his starting-point less than a month after he had left it to go down-stream.[1]

Another Massachusetts man, Colonel John May, had made the same trip just previously. His experiences were very like those of Dr. Cutler; but in his journal he told them more entertainingly, being a man of considerable humor and sharp observation. He travelled on horseback from Boston. In Philadelphia he put up "at the sign of the Connastago Wagon"—the kind of wagon then

[1] Cutler, p. 420.

used in the up-country, and afterwards for two generations the wheeled house with which the pioneers moved westward across plain and prairie. He halted for some days in the log-built town of Pittsburg, and, like many other travellers of the day, took a dislike to the place and to its inhabitants, who were largely Pennsylvania Germans. He mentions that he had reached it in thirty days from Boston, and had not lost a pound of his baggage, which had accompanied him in a wagon under the care of some of his hired men. At Pittsburg he was much struck by the beauty of the mountains and the river, and also by the numbers of flat-boats, loaded with immigrants, which were constantly drifting and rowing past on their way to Kentucky. From the time of reaching the river his journal is filled with comments on the extraordinary abundance and great size of the various kinds of food fishes.

At last, late in May, he started in a crowded flat-boat down the Ohio, and was enchanted with the wild and beautiful scenery. He was equally pleased with the settlement at the mouth of the Muskingum; and he was speedily on good terms with the officers of the fort, who dined and wined him to his heart's content. There were rumors of savage warfare from below; but around Marietta the Indians were friendly. May and his people set to work to clear land and put up buildings; and

they lived sumptuously, for game swarmed. The hunters supplied them with quantities of deer and wild turkeys, and occasionally elk and buffalo were also killed; while quantities of fish could be caught without effort, and the gardens and fields yielded plenty of vegetables. On July 4th, the members of the Ohio Company entertained the officers from Fort Harmar, and the ladies of the garrison, at an abundant dinner, and drank thirteen toasts,—to the United States, to Congress, to Washington, to the King of France, to the new Constitution, to the Society of the Cincinnati, and various others.

Colonel May built him a fine "mansion house," thirty-six feet by eighteen, and fifteen feet high, with a good cellar underneath, and in the windows panes of glass he had brought all the way from Boston. He continued to enjoy the life in all its phases, from hunting in the woods to watching the sun rise, and making friends with the robins, which, in the wilderness, always followed the settlements. In August, he went up the river, without adventure, and returned to his home.[1]

Such a trip as either of these was a mere holiday picnic. It offers as striking a contrast as well could be offered to the wild and lonely journeyings of the stark wilderness hunters and Indian fighters

[1] *Journal and Letters of Colonel John May*, one of the many valuable historical publications of Robert Clarke & Co., of Cincinnati.

who first went west of the mountains. General Rufus Putnam and his associates did a deed, the consequences of which were of vital importance. They showed that they possessed the highest attributes of good citizenship—resolution and sagacity, stern morality, and the capacity to govern others as well as themselves. But they performed no pioneer feat of any note as such, and they were not called upon to display a tithe of the reckless daring and iron endurance of hardship which characterized the conquerors of the Illinois and the founders of Kentucky and Tennessee. This is in no sense a reflection upon them. They did not need to give proof of a courage they had shown time and again in bloody battles against the best troops of Europe. In this particular enterprise, in which they showed so many admirable qualities, they had little chance to show the quality of adventurous bravery. They drifted comfortably down-stream, from the log fort whence they started, past many settlers' houses, until they came to the post of a small Federal garrison, where they built their town. Such a trip is not to be mentioned in the same breath with the long wanderings of Clark and Boon and Robertson, when they went forth unassisted to subdue the savage and make tame the shaggy wilderness.

St. Clair, the first governor, was a Scotchman of good family. He had been a patriotic but unsuc-

cessful general in the Revolutionary army. He was a friend of Washington, and in politics a firm Federalist; he was devoted to the cause of Union and Liberty, and was a conscientious, high-minded man. But he had no aptitude for the incredibly difficult task of subduing the formidable forest Indians, with their peculiar and dangerous system of warfare; and he possessed no capacity for getting on with the frontiersmen, being without sympathy for their virtues while keenly alive to their very unattractive faults.

In the fall of 1787 another purchase of public lands was negotiated, by the Miami Company. The chief personage in this company was John Cleves Symmes, one of the first judges of the Northwestern Territory. Rights were acquired to take up one million acres, and under these rights three small settlements were made towards the close of the year 1788. One of them was chosen by St. Clair to be the seat of government. This little town had been called Losantiville in its first infancy, but St. Clair re-christened it Cincinnati, in honor of the Society of the officers of the Continental army.

The men who formed these Miami Company colonies came largely from the middle States. Like the New England founders of Marietta, very many of them, if not most, had served in the Continental army. They were good settlers; they

made good material out of which to build up a great state. Their movement was modelled on that of Putnam and his associates. It was a triumph of collectivism rather than of individualism. The settlers were marshalled in a company, instead of moving freely by themselves, and they took a territory granted them by Congress, under certain conditions, and defended for them by the officers and troops of the regular army.

Civil government was speedily organized. St. Clair and the judges formed the first legislature; in theory they were only permitted to adopt laws already in existence in the old States, but as a matter of fact they tried any legislative experiments they saw fit. St. Clair was an autocrat, both by military training and by political principles. He was a man of rigid honor, and he guarded the interests of the territory with jealous integrity; but he exercised such a rigorous supervision over the acts of his subordinate colleagues, the judges, that he became involved in wrangles at the very beginning of his administration. To prevent the incoming of unauthorized intruders, he issued a proclamation summoning all newly arrived persons to report at once to the local commandants, and, with a view of keeping the game for the use of the actual settlers, and also to prevent as far as possible fresh irritation being given the Indians, he forbade all hunting in the territory,

for hides or flesh save by the inhabitants proper.[1] Only an imperfect obedience was rendered either proclamation.

Thus the settlement of the Northwest was fairly begun, on a system hitherto untried. The fates and the careers of all the mighty States which yet lay formless in the forest were in great measure determined by what was at this time done. The nation had decreed that they should all have equal rights with the older States and with one another, and yet that they should remain forever inseparable from the Union; and above all, it had been settled that the bondman should be unknown within their borders. Their founding represented the triumph of the principle of collective national action over the spirit of intense individualism displayed so commonly on the frontier. The uncontrolled initiative of the individual, which was the chief force in the settlement of the Southwest, was given comparatively little play in the settlement of the Northwest. The Northwest owed its existence to the action of the nation as a whole.

[1] Draper MSS.; William Clark Papers; Proclamation, Vincennes, June 28, 1790.

CHAPTER II

THE WAR IN THE NORTHWEST, 1787–1790

THE Federal troops were camped in the Federal territory north of the Ohio. They garrisoned the forts and patrolled between the little log towns. They were commanded by the Federal General, Harmar, and the territory was ruled by the Federal Governor, St. Clair. Thenceforth the national authorities and the regular troops played the chief parts in the struggle for the Northwest. The frontier militia became a mere adjunct—often necessary, but always untrustworthy—of the regular forces.

For some time the regulars fared ill in the warfare with the savages; and a succession of mortifying failures closed with a defeat more ruinous than any which had been experienced since the days of the "iron-tempered general with the pipe-clay brain,"—for the disaster which befell St. Clair was as overwhelming as that wherein Braddock met his death. The continued checks excited the anger of the eastern people, and the dismay and derision of the Westerners. They were keenly felt by the officers of the army; and they furnished an

excuse for those who wished to jeer at regular troops, and exalt the militia. Jefferson, who never understood anything about warfare, being a timid man, and who belonged to the visionary school which always denounced the army and navy, was given a legitimate excuse to criticise the tactics of the regulars [1]; and of course he never sought occasion to comment on the even worse failings of the militia.

The truth was that the American military authorities fell into much the same series of errors as their predecessors, the British, untaught by the dreary and mortifying experience of the latter in fighting these forest foes. The War Department at Washington, and the Federal generals who first came to the Northwest, did not seem able to realize the formidable character of the Indian armies, and were certainly unable to teach their own troops how to fight them. Harmar and St. Clair were both fair officers, and in open country were able to acquit themselves respectably in the face of civilized foes. But they did not have the peculiar genius necessary to the successful Indian fighter, and they never learned how to carry on a campaign in the woods.

They had the justifiable distrust of the militia felt by all the officers of the Continental army.

[1] Draper MSS.; G. R. Clark Papers; Jefferson to Innes, March 7, 1791.

In the long campaigns waged against Howe, Clinton, and Cornwallis they had learned the immense superiority of the Continental troops to the local militia. They knew that the Revolution would have failed had it not been for the Continental troops. They knew also, by the bitter experience common to all officers who had been through the war, that, though the militia might on occasion do well, yet they could never be trusted; they were certain to desert or grow sulky and mutinous if exposed to the fatigue and hardship of a long campaign, while in a pitched battle in the open they never fought as stubbornly as the regulars, and often would not fight at all.

All this was true; yet the officers of the regular army failed to understand that it did not imply the capacity of the regular troops to fight savages on their own ground. They showed little real comprehension of the extraordinary difficulty of such warfare against such foes, and of the reasons which made it so hazardous. They could not help assigning other causes than the real ones for every defeat and failure. They attributed each in turn to the effects of ambuscade or surprise, instead of realizing that in each the prime factor was the formidable fighting power of the individual Indian warrior, when in the thick forest which was to him a home, and when acting under that species of wilderness discipline which was so effective for a

single crisis in his peculiar warfare. The Indian has rarely shown any marked excellence as a fighter in mass in the open; though of course there have been one or two brilliant exceptions. At times in our wars we have tried the experiment of drilling bodies of Indians as if they were whites, and using them in the ordinary way in battle. Under such conditions, as a rule, they have shown themselves inferior to the white troops against whom they were pitted. In the same way they failed to show themselves a match for the white hunters of the great plains when on equal terms. But their marvellous faculty for taking advantage of cover, and for fighting in concert when under cover, has always made the warlike tribes foes to be dreaded beyond all others when in the woods, or among wild broken mountains.

The history of our warfare with the Indians during the century following the close of the Revolution is marked by curiously sharp contrasts in the efficiency shown by the regular troops in campaigns carried on at different times and under varying conditions. These contrasts are due much more to the difference in the conditions under which the campaigns were waged than to the difference in the bodily prowess of the Indians. When we had been in existence as a nation for a century, the Modocs in their lava-beds and the Apaches amid their waterless mountains were still

waging against the regulars of the day the same tedious and dangerous warfare waged against Harmar and St. Clair by the forest Indians. There were the same weary, long-continued campaigns; the same difficulty in bringing the savages to battle; the same blind fighting against hidden antagonists shielded by the peculiar nature of their fastnesses; and, finally, the same great disparity of loss against the white troops. During the intervening hundred years there had been many similar struggles; as, for instance, that against the Seminoles. Yet there had also been many struggles, against Indians naturally more formidable, in which the troops again and again worsted their Indian foes even when the odds in numbers were two or three to one against the whites. The difference between these different classes of wars was partly accounted for by change in weapons and methods of fighting; partly by the change in the character of the battle-grounds. The horse Indians of the plains were as elusive and difficult to bring to battle as the Indians of the mountains and forests; but in the actual fighting they had no chance to take advantage of cover in the way which rendered so formidable their brethren of the hills and the deep woods. In consequence, their occasional slaughtering victories, including the most famous of all, the battle of the Rosebud, in which Custer fell, took the form of the overwhelm-

ing of a comparatively small number of whites by immense masses of mounted horsemen. When their weapons were inferior, as on the first occasions when they were brought into contact with troops carrying breech-loading arms of precision, or when they tried the tactics of downright fighting, and of charging fairly in the open, they were often themselves beaten or repulsed with fearful slaughter by mere handfuls of whites. In the years 1867–68, all the horse Indians of the plains were at war with us, and many battles were fought with varying fortune. Two were especially noteworthy. In each a small body of troops and frontier scouts, under the command of a regular army officer who was also a veteran Indian fighter, beat back an overwhelming Indian force, which attempted to storm by open onslaught the position held by the white riflemen. In one instance fifty men, under Major George H. Forsyth, beat back nine hundred warriors, killing or wounding double their own number. In the other a still more remarkable defence was made by thirty-one men under Major James Powell against an even larger force, which charged again and again, and did not accept their repulse as final until they had lost three hundred of their foremost braves. For years the Sioux spoke with bated breath of this battle as the "medicine fight,"[1] the defeat so

[1] For all this, see Dodge's admirable *Our Wild Indians*.

overwhelming that it could be accounted for only by supernatural interference.

But no such victory was ever gained over mountain or forest Indians who had become accustomed to fighting the white men. Every officer who has ever faced these foes has had to spend years in learning his work, and has then been forced to see a bitterly inadequate reward for his labors. The officers of the regular army who served in the forests north of the Ohio just after the Revolution, had to undergo a strange and painful training; and were obliged to content themselves with scanty and hard-won triumphs even after this training had been undergone.

The officers took some time to learn their duties as Indian fighters, but the case was much worse with the rank and file who served under them. From the beginning of our history it often proved difficult to get the best type of native American to go into the regular army save in time of war with a powerful enemy, for the low rate of pay was not attractive, while the disciplined subordination of the soldiers to their officers seemed irksome to people with an exaggerated idea of individual freedom and no proper conception of the value of obedience. Very many of the regular soldiers have always been of foreign birth; and in 1787, on the Ohio, the percentage of Irish and Germans in the ranks was probably fully as large as it was on the great plains

a century later.[1] They, as others, at that early date, were, to a great extent, drawn from the least desirable classes of the eastern seaboard.[2] Three or four years later an unfriendly observer wrote of St. Clair's soldiers that they were a wretched set of men, weak and feeble, many of them mere boys, while others were rotten with drink and debauchery. He remarked that men "purchased from the prisons, wheel-barrows, and brothels of the nation at foolishly low wages, would never do to fight Indians"; and that against such foes, who were terrible enemies in the woods, there was need of first-class, specially trained troops, instead of trying to use "a set of men who enlisted because they could no longer live unhung any other way."[3]

Doubtless this estimate, made under the sting of defeat, was too harsh; and it was even more applicable to the forced levies of militia than to the Federal soldiers; but the shortcomings of the regular troops were sufficiently serious to need no exaggeration. Their own officers were far from pleased with the recruits they got.

[1] Denny's "Journal," *passim*.

[2] For fear of misunderstanding, I wish to add that at many periods the rank and file have been composed of excellent material; of recent years their character has steadily risen, and the stuff itself has always proved good when handled for a sufficient length of time by good commanders.

[3] Draper Collection. Letter of John Cleves Symmes to Elias Boudinot, January 12, 1792.

To the younger officers, with a taste for sport, the life beyond the Ohio was delightful. The climate was pleasant, the country beautiful, the water was clear as crystal, and game abounded. In hard weather the troops lived on salt beef; but at other times their daily rations were two pounds of turkey or venison, or a pound and a half of bear meat or buffalo beef. Yet this game was supplied by hired hunters, not by the soldiers themselves. One of the officers wrote that he had to keep his troops practising steadily at a target, for they were incompetent to meet an enemy with the musket; they could not kill in a week enough game to last them a day.[1] It was almost impossible to train such troops, in a limited number of months or years, so as to enable them to meet their forest foes on equal terms. The discipline to which they were accustomed was admirably fitted for warfare in the open; but it was not suited for warfare in the woods. They had to learn even the use of their firearms with painful labor. It was merely hopeless to try to teach them to fight Indian fashion, all scattering out for themselves, and each taking a tree-trunk, and trying to slay an individual enemy. They were too clumsy; they utterly lacked the wild-creature qualities proper to the men of the wilderness, the men who inherited

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150; Doughty's letter, March 15, 1786; also, November 30, 1785.

wolf-cunning and panther-stealth from countless generations, who bought bare life itself only at the price of never-ceasing watchfulness, craft, and ferocity.

The regulars were certainly not ideal troops with which to oppose such foes; but they were the best attainable at that time. They possessed traits which were lacking in even the best of the frontier militia; and most of the militia fell far short of the best. When properly trained, the regulars could be trusted to persevere through a campaign; whereas the militia were sure to disband if kept out for any length of time. Moreover, a regular army formed a weapon with a temper tried and known; whereas a militia force was the most brittle of swords which might give one true stroke, or might fly into splinters at the first slight blow. Regulars were the only troops who could be trusted to wear out their foes in a succession of weary and hard-fought campaigns.

The best backwoods fighters, however, such men as Kenton and Brady had in their scout companies, were much superior to the regulars, and were able to meet the Indians on at least equal terms. But there were only a very few such men; and they were too impatient of discipline to be embodied in an army. The bulk of the frontier militia consisted of men who were better riflemen than the regulars and often physically abler, but

who were otherwise in every military sense inferior, possessing their defects, sometimes in an accentuated form, and not possessing their compensating virtues. Like the regulars, these militia fought the Indians at a terrible disadvantage. A defeat for either meant murderous slaughter; for whereas the trained Indian fighters fought or fled each for himself, the ordinary troops huddled together in a mass, an easy mark for their savage foes.

The task set the leaders of the army in the Northwest was one of extreme difficulty and danger. They had to overcome a foe trained through untold ages how to fight most effectively on the very battle-ground where the contest was to be waged. To the whites a march through the wilderness was fraught with incredible toil; whereas the Indians moved without baggage, and scattered and came together as they wished, so that it was impossible to bring them to battle against their will. All that could be done was to try to beat them when they chose to receive or deliver an attack. With ordinary militia it was hopeless to attempt to accomplish anything needing prolonged and sustained effort, and, as already said, the thoroughly trained Indian fighters who were able to beat the savages at their own game were too few in numbers, and too unaccustomed to control and restraint, to permit of their forming the main body of the army in an offensive cam-

paign. There remained only the regulars; and the raw recruits had to undergo a long and special training, and be put under the command of a thoroughly capable leader, like old Mad Anthony Wayne, before they could be employed to advantage.

The feeling between the regular troops and the frontiersmen was often very bitter, and on several occasions violent brawls resulted. One such occurred at Limestone, where the brutal Indian fighter Wetzel lived. Wetzel had murdered a friendly Indian, and the soldiers bore him a grudge. When they were sent to arrest him the townspeople rallied to his support. Wetzel himself resisted, and was, very properly, roughly handled in consequence. The interference of the townspeople was vigorously repaid in kind; they soon gave up the attempt, and afterwards one or two of them were ill-treated or plundered by the soldiers. They made complaint to the civil authorities, and a court-martial was then ordered by the Federal commanders. This court-martial acquitted the soldiers. Wetzel soon afterwards made his escape, and the incident ended.[1]

By 1787, the Indian war had begun with all its

[1] Draper MSS. Harmar's letter to Henry Lee, September 27, 1789. Also depositions of McCurdy, Lawler, Caldwell, and others, and proceedings of court-martial. The depositions conflict.

old fury. The thickly settled districts were not much troubled, and the towns which, like Marietta in the following year, grew up under the shadow of a Federal fort were comparatively safe. But the frontier of Kentucky, and of Virginia proper along the Ohio, suffered severely. There was great scarcity of powder and lead, and even of guns, and there was difficulty in procuring provisions for those militia who consented to leave their work and turn out when summoned. The settlers were harried, and the surveyors feared to go out to their work on the range. There were the usual horrible incidents of Indian warfare. A glimpse of one of the innumerable dreadful tragedies is afforded by the statement of one party of scouts, who, in following the trail of an Indian war band, found at the crossing of the river "the small tracks of a number of children," prisoners from a raid made on the Monongahela settlements.[1]

The settlers in the harried territory sent urgent appeals for help to the Governor of Virginia and to Congress. In these appeals stress was laid upon the poverty of the frontiersmen, and their lack of ammunition. The writers pointed out that the men of the border should receive support, if only from motives of policy; for it was of great importance to the people in the thickly settled dis-

[1] State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. ii. Letters of David Shepherd to Governor Randolph, April 30 and May 24, 1787.

tricts that the war should be kept on the frontier, and that the men who lived there should remain as a barrier against the Indians. If the latter broke through and got among the less hardy and warlike people of the interior, they would work much greater havoc; for in Indian warfare the borderers were as much superior to the more peaceful people behind them as a veteran to a raw recruit.[1]

These appeals did not go unheeded; but there was embarrassment in affording the frontier adequate protection, both because the party to which the borderers themselves belonged foolishly objected to the employment of a fair-sized regular army, and because Congress still clung to the belief that war could be averted by treaty, and so forbade the taking of proper offensive measures. In the years 1787, '88, and '89 the ravages continued; many settlers were slain, with their families, and many bodies of immigrants destroyed; while the scouting and rescue parties of whites killed a few Indians in return.[2] All the Indians were not yet at war, however; and curious agreements were entered into by individuals on both sides. In the absence on either side of any government with full authority and power, the leaders would often negotiate some special or temporary truce,

[1] Draper MSS. Lieutenant Marshall to Franklin, November 6, 1787.

[2] *Virginia State Papers*, iv., 357.

referring only to certain limited localities, or to certain people; and would agree between themselves for the interchange or ransom of prisoners. There is a letter of Boon's extant in which he notifies a leading Kentucky colonel that a certain captive woman must be given up, in accordance with an agreement he has made with one of the noted Indian chiefs; and he insists upon the immediate surrender of the woman, to clear his "promise and obligation." [1]

The Indians watched the Ohio with especial care, and took their toll from the immense numbers of immigrants who went down it. After passing the Muskingum no boat was safe. If the war-parties, lurking along the banks, came on a boat moored to the shore, or swept thither by wind or current, the crew was at their mercy; and, grown bold by success, they sometimes launched small flotillas of canoes and attacked the scows on the water. In such attacks they were often successful, for they always made the assault with the odds in their favor; though they were sometimes beaten back with heavy loss.

When the war was at its height the boats going down the Ohio preferred to move in brigades. An army officer has left a description [2] of one such

[1] Draper MSS., Boon Papers. Boon to Robert Patterson, March 16, 1787.

[2] Denny's "Military Journal," April 19, 1790.

flotilla, over which he had assumed command. It contained sixteen flat-boats, then usually called "Kentuck boats," and two keels. The flat-boats were lashed three together, and kept in one line. The women, children, and cattle were put in the middle scows, while the outside were manned and worked by the men. The keel-boats kept on either flank. This particular flotilla was unmolested by the Indians, but was almost wrecked in a furious storm of wind and rain.

The Federal authorities were still hopelessly endeavoring to come to some understanding with the Indians; they were holding treaties with some of the tribes, sending addresses and making speeches to others, and keeping envoys in the neighborhood of Detroit. These envoys watched the Indians who were there, and tried to influence the great gatherings of different tribes who came together at Sandusky to consult as to the white advance.[1]

These efforts to negotiate were as disheartening as was usually the case under such circumstances. There were many different tribes, and some were for peace, while others were for war; and even the peaceful ones could not restrain their turbulent young men. Far-off nations of Indians who had

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. iii.; Harmar's speech to the Indians at Vincennes, September 17, 1787; Richard Butler to the Secretary of War, May 4, 1788; etc.

never been harmed by the whites, and were in no danger from them, sent war-parties to the Ohio; and the friendly tribes let them pass without interference. The Iroquois were eagerly consulted by the western Indians, and in the summer of 1788 a great party of them came to Sandusky to meet in council all the tribes of the Lakes and the Ohio valley, and even some from the upper Mississippi. With the Iroquois came the famous chief Joseph Brant, a mighty warrior, and a man of education, who, in his letters to the United States officials, showed much polished diplomacy.[1]

The tribes who gathered at this great council met on the soil which, by treaty with England, had been declared American, and came from regions which the same treaty had defined as lying within the boundaries of the United States. But these provisions of the treaty had never been executed, owing largely to a failure on the part of the Americans themselves to execute certain other provisions. The land was really as much British as ever, and was so treated by the British Governor of Canada, Lord Dorchester, who had just made a tour of the lake posts. The tribes were feudatory to the British, and in their talks spoke of the King of Great Britain as "father," and Brant was a British pensioner. British agents were in constant communication with the Indians at the

[1] State Department MSS. No. 150 vol. iii., pp. 47 and 51.

councils, and they distributed gifts among them with a hitherto unheard-of lavishness. In every way they showed their resolution to remain in full touch with their red allies.[1]

Nevertheless, they were anxious that peace should be made. The Wyandots, too, seconded them, and addressed the Wabash Indians at one of the councils, urging them to cease their outrages on the Americans.[2] These Wyandots had long been converted, and in addressing their heathen brethren, said proudly: "We are not as other nations are—we, the Wyandots—we are Christians." They certainly showed themselves the better for their religion, and they were still the bravest of the brave. But though the Wabash Indians in answering spake them fair, they had no wish to go to peace; and the Wyandots were the only tribes who strove earnestly to prevent war. The American agents who had gone to the Detroit River were forced to report that there was little hope of putting an end to hostilities.[3] The councils accomplished nothing towards averting a war; on the contrary, they tended to band all the northwestern Indians together in a loose confederacy, so that active hostilities against some were sure in the end to involve all.

[1] State Department MSS., St. Clair to Knox, September 14, 1788; St. Clair to Jay, December 13, 1788.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 267, Detroit River's Mouth, July 23, 1788.

[3] *Ibid.*, James Rinkin to Richard Butler, July 20, 1788.

While the councils were sitting and while the Americans were preparing for the treaties, outrages of the most flagrant kind occurred. One, out of many, was noteworthy as showing both the treachery of the Indians, and the further fact that some tribes went to war, not because they had been in any way maltreated, but from mere lust of blood and plunder. In July of this year, 1788, Governor St. Clair was making ready for a treaty to which he had invited some of the tribes. It was to be held on the Muskingum, and he sent to the appointed place provisions for the Indians with a guard of men. One day a party of Indians, whose tribe was then unknown, though later they turned out to be Chippewas from the upper lakes, suddenly fell on the guard. They charged home with great spirit, using their sharp spears well, and killed, wounded, or captured several soldiers; but they were repulsed, and retreated, carrying with them their dead, save one warrior.[1] A few days afterwards they imprudently ventured back, pretending innocence, and six were seized, and sent to one of the forts as prisoners. Their act of treacherous violence had, of course, caused the immediate abandonment of the proposed treaty.

The remaining Chippewas marched towards home, with the scalps of the men they had slain, and with one captured soldier. They passed by

[1] *St. Clair Papers*, ii., 50.

Detroit, telling the French villagers that "their father [the British commandant] was a dog," because he had given them no arms or ammunition, and that in consequence they would not deliver him their prisoner, but would take the poor wretch with them to their Mackinaw home. Accordingly, they carried him on to the far-off island at the mouth of Lake Michigan; but just as they were preparing to make him run the gauntlet the British commander of the lonely little post interfered. This subaltern with his party of a dozen soldiers was surrounded by many times his number of ferocious savages, and was completely isolated in the wilderness; but his courage stood as high as his humanity, and he broke through the Indians, threatening them with death if they interfered, rescued the captive American, and sent him home in safety.[1]

The other Indians made no attempt to check the Chippewas; on the contrary, the envoys of the Iroquois and Delawares made vain efforts to secure the release of the Chippewa prisoners. On the other hand, the generous gallantry of the British commander at Mackinaw was in some sort equalled by the action of the traders on the Maumee, who went to great expense in buying from

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. iii. William Wilson and James Rinkin to Richard Butler, August 4, 1788; Wilson and Rinkin to St. Clair, August 31, 1788.

the Shawnees Americans whom they had doomed to the terrible torture of death at the stake.[1]

Under such circumstances the treaties of course came to naught. After interminable delays the Indians either refused to treat at all, or else the acts of those who did were promptly repudiated by those who did not. In consequence, throughout this period even the treaties that were made were quite worthless, for they bound nobody. Moreover, there were the usual clashes between the National and State authorities. While Harmar was trying to treat, the Kentuckians were organizing retaliatory inroads; and while the United States Commissioners were trying to hold big peace councils on the Ohio, the New York and Massachusetts Commissioners were conducting independent negotiations at what is now Buffalo, to determine the western boundary of New York.[2]

All the while the ravages grew steadily more severe. The Federal officers at the little, widely scattered forts were at their wits' ends in trying to protect the outlying settlers and retaliate on the

[1] State Department MSS., Rinkin to Butler, July, 2, 1788; St. Clair to Knox, September 4, 1788.

[2] *Ibid.*, Wilson and Rinkin to St. Clair, July 29, 1788. These treaties made at the Ohio forts are quite unworthy of preservation, save for mere curiosity; they really settled nothing whatever and conferred no rights that were not taken with the strong hand; yet they are solemnly quoted in some books as if they were the real sources of title to parts of the Northwest.

Indians; and as the latter grew bolder they menaced the forts themselves and harried the troops who convoyed provisions to them. Of the innumerable tragedies which occurred, the record of a few has by chance been preserved. One may be worth giving, merely as a sample of many others. On the Virginian side of the Ohio lived a pioneer farmer of some note, named Van Swearingen.[1] One day his son crossed the river to hunt with a party of strangers. Near a "waste cabbin," the deserted log-hut of some reckless adventurer, an Indian war band came on them unawares, slew three, and carried off the young man. His father did not know whether they had killed him or not. He could find no trace of him, and he wrote to the commander of the nearest fort, begging him to try to get news from the Indian villages as to whether his son were alive or dead, and to employ for the purpose any friendly Indian or white scout, at whatever price was set—he would pay it "to the utmost farthing." He could give no clue to the Indians who had done the deed; all he could say was that a few days before, one of these war-parties, while driving off a number of horses, was overtaken by the riflemen of the neighborhood and scattered, after a fight in which one white man and two red men were killed.

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. ii., Van Swearingen to William Butler, Washington County, September 29, 1787.

The old frontiersman never found his son; doubtless the boy was slain; but his fate, like the fate of hundreds of others, was swallowed up in the gloomy mystery of the wilderness. So far from being unusual, the incident attracted no comment, for it was one of every-day occurrence. Its only interest lies in the fact that it was of a kind that befell the family of almost every dweller in the wilds. Danger and death were so common that the particular expression which each might take made small impress on the minds of the old pioneers. Every one of them had a long score of slain friends and kinsfolk to avenge upon his savage foes.

The subalterns in command of the little detachments which moved between the posts, whether they went by land or water, were forced to be ever on the watch against surprise and ambush. This was particularly the case with the garrison at Vincennes. The Wabash Indians were all the time out in parties to murder and plunder; and yet these same thieves and murderers were continually coming into town and strolling innocently about the fort; for it was impossible to tell the peaceful Indians from the hostile. They were ever in communication with the equally treacherous and ferocious Miami tribes, to whose towns the war-parties often brought five or six scalps in a day, and prisoners, too, doomed to a death of awful

Doomed to Death.

torture at the stake. There is no need to waste sympathy on the northwestern Indians for their final fate; never were defeat and subjection more richly deserved.

The bands of fierce and crafty braves who lounged about the wooden fort at Vincennes watched eagerly the outgoing and incoming of the troops, and were prompt to dog and waylay any party they thought they could overcome. They took advantage of the unwillingness of the Federal commander to harass Indians who might be friendly; and plotted at ease the destruction of the very troops who spent much of the time in keeping intruders off their lands. In the summer of 1788 they twice followed parties of soldiers from the town when they went down the Wabash, and attacked them by surprise, from the river banks, as they sat in their boats. In one instance, the lieutenant in command got off with the loss of but two or three men. In the other, of the thirty-six soldiers who composed the party ten were killed, eight wounded, and the greater part of the provisions and goods they were conveying were captured; while the survivors, pushing down-stream, ultimately made their way to the Illinois towns.[1] This last tragedy was avenged by a band of thirty

[1] State Department MSS., No. 150, vol. iii. Lieutenant Spear to Harmar, June 2, 1788; Hamtranck to Harmar, August 12, 1788.

mounted riflemen from Kentucky, led by the noted backwoods fighter Hardin. They had crossed the Ohio on a retaliatory foray, many of their horses having been stolen by the Indians. When near Vincennes they happened to stumble on the war-party that had attacked the soldiers; they slew ten and scattered the others to the winds, capturing thirty horses.[1]

The war bands who harried the settlements, or lurked along the banks of the Ohio, bent on theft and murder, did terrible deeds, and at times suffered terrible fates in return, when some untoward chance threw them in the way of the grim border vengeance. The books of the old annalists are filled with tales of disaster and retribution, of horrible suffering and of fierce prowess. Countless stories are told of heroic fight and panic-rout; of midnight assault on lonely cabins, and ambush of heavy-laden immigrant scows; of the deaths of brave men and cowards, and the dreadful butchery of women and children; of bloody raid and revengeful counter-stroke. Sometimes a band of painted marauders would kill family after family without suffering any loss, would capture boat after boat without effective resistance from the immigrants, paralyzed by panic-fright, and would finally escape unmolested, or beat off with ease a

[1] Draper MSS. William Clark Papers. N. T. Dalton to W. Clark, Vincennes, August 23, 1788; also Denny, p. 528.

possibly larger party of pursuers who happened to be ill led, or to be men with little training in wilderness warfare.

At other times all this might be reversed. A cabin might be defended with such maddened courage by some stout rifleman, fighting for his cowering wife and children, that a score of savages would recoil, baffled, leaving many of their number dead. A boat's crew of resolute men might beat back, with heavy loss, an over-eager onslaught of Indians in canoes, or push their slow, unwieldy craft from shore under a rain of rifle-balls, while the wounded oarsmen strained at the bloody handles of the sweeps, and the men who did not row gave shot for shot, firing at the flame-tongues in the dark woods. A party of scouts, true wilderness veterans, equal to their foes in woodcraft and cunning, and superior in markmanship and reckless courage, might follow and scatter some war band and return in triumph with scalps and retaken captives and horses.

A volume could readily be filled with adventures of this kind, all varying infinitely in detail, but all alike in their bloody ferocity. During the years 1789 and 1790 scores of Indian war-parties went on such trips, to meet every kind of success and failure. The deeds of one such, which happen to be recorded, may be given merely to serve as a sample of what happened in countless other cases.

In the early spring of 1790 a band of fifty-four Indians of various tribes, but chiefly Cherokees and Shawnees, established a camp near the mouth of the Scioto.[1] They first attacked a small, new-built station, on one of the bottoms of the Ohio, some twenty miles from Limestone, and killed or captured all its fifteen inhabitants. They spared the lives of two of the captives, but forced the wretches to act as decoys so as to try to lure passing boats within reach.

Their first success was with a boat going down-river, and containing four men and two unmarried girls, besides a quantity of goods intended for the stores in the Kentucky towns. The two decoys appeared on the right bank, begging piteously to be taken on board, and stating that they had just escaped from the savages. Three of the voyagers, not liking the looks of the men, refused to land, but the fourth, a reckless fellow named Flynn, and the two girls, who were coarse, foolish, good-natured frontier women of the lower sort, took pity upon the seeming fugitives, and insisted on taking them aboard. Accordingly, the scow was shoved in-shore, and Flynn jumped on the bank, only to be immediately seized by the Indians, who then opened fire on the others. They tried to put off and fired back, but were helpless; one man and a

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, vol. i., pp. 87, 88, 91.

girl were shot, another wounded, and the savages then swarmed aboard, seized everything, and got very drunk on a keg of whisky. The fates of the captives were various, each falling to some different group of savages. Flynn, the cause of the trouble, fell to the Cherokees, who took him to the Miami town, and burned him alive, with dreadful torments. The remaining girl, after suffering outrage and hardship, was bound to the stake, but saved by a merciful Indian, who sent her home. Of the two remaining men, one ran the gauntlet successfully, and afterwards escaped and reached home through the woods, while the other was ransomed by a French trader at Sandusky.

Before thus disposing of their captives, the Indians hung about the mouth of the Scioto for some time. They captured a pirogue going up-stream, and killed all six paddlers. Soon afterwards three heavily laden scows passed, drifting down with the current. Aboard these were twenty-eight men, with their women and children, together with many horses and bales of merchandise. They had but sixteen guns among them, and many were immigrants, unaccustomed to savage warfare, and therefore they made no effort to repel the attack, which could easily have been done by resolute, well-armed veterans. The Indians crowded into the craft they had captured, and paddled and

rowed after the scows, whooping and firing. They nearly overtook the last scow, whereupon its people shifted to the second, and abandoned it. When further pressed the people shifted into the headmost scow, cut holes in its sides so as to work all the oars, and escaped down-stream, leaving the Indians to plunder the two abandoned boats, which contained twenty-eight horses and fifteen hundred pounds' worth of goods.

The Kentuckians of the neighborhood sent word to General Harmar, begging him to break up this nest of plunderers. Accordingly, he started after them, with his regular troops. He was joined by a number of Kentucky mounted riflemen, under the command of Colonel Charles Scott, a rough Indian fighter and veteran of the Revolutionary War, who afterwards became governor of the State. Scott had moved to Kentucky not long after the close of the war with England; he had lost a son at the hands of the savages,[1] and he delighted in war against them.

Harmar made a circuit and came down along the Scioto, hoping to surprise the Indian camp; but he might as well have hoped to surprise a party of timber wolves. His foes scattered and disappeared in the dense forest. Nevertheless, coming across some moccasin tracks, Scott's horsemen followed the trail, killed four Indians, and carried

[1] State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. ii., p. 563.

in the scalps to Limestone. The chastisement proved of little avail. A month later five immigrant boats, while moored to the bank a few miles from Limestone, were rushed by the Indians at night; one boat was taken, all the thirteen souls aboard being killed or captured.

Among the men who suffered about this time was the Italian Vigo; a fine, manly, generous fellow, of whom St. Clair spoke as having put the United States under heavy obligations, and as being "in truth the most disinterested person" he had ever known.[1] While taking his trading boat up the Wabash, Vigo was attacked by an Indian war-party, three of his men were killed, and he was forced to drop down-stream. Meeting another trading boat manned by Americans, he again essayed to force a passage in company with it, but they were both attacked with fury. The other boat got off; but Vigo's was captured. However, the Indians, when they found the crew consisted of creoles, molested none of them, telling them that they only warred against the Americans; though they plundered the boat.

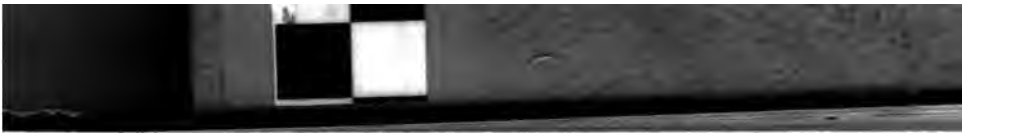
By the summer of 1790 the raids of the Indians had become unbearable. Fresh robberies and murders were committed every day in Kentucky, or along the Wabash and Ohio. Writing to the

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, vol. i., September 19, 1790.

Secretary of War, a prominent Kentuckian, well knowing all the facts, estimated that during the seven years which had elapsed since the close of the Revolutionary War the Indians had slain fifteen hundred people in Kentucky itself, or on the immigrant routes leading thither, and had stolen twenty thousand horses, besides destroying immense quantities of other property.[1] The Federal generals were also urgent in asserting the folly of carrying on a merely defensive war against such foes. All the efforts of the Federal authorities to make treaties with the Indians and persuade them to be peaceful had failed. The Indians themselves had renewed hostilities, and the different tribes had one by one joined in the war, behaving with a treachery only equalled by their ferocity. With great reluctance, the National Government concluded that an effort to chastise the hostile savages could no longer be delayed; and those on the Maumee, or Miami of the Lakes, and on the Wabash, whose guilt had been peculiarly heinous, were singled out as the objects of attack.

The expedition against the Wabash towns was led by the Federal commander at Vincennes, Major Hamtranck. No resistance was encountered; and after burning a few villages of bark huts and destroying some corn he returned to Vincennes.

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, vol. i. Innes to Secretary of War, July 7, 1790.



The main expedition was that against the Miami Indians, and was led by General Harmar himself. It was arranged that there should be a nucleus of regular troops, but that the force should consist mainly of militia from Kentucky and Pennsylvania, the former furnishing twice as many as the latter. The troops were to gather on the 15th of September at Fort Washington, on the north bank of the Ohio, a day's journey downstream from Limestone.

At the appointed time the militia began to straggle in; the regular officers had long been busy getting their own troops, artillery, and military stores in readiness. The regulars felt the utmost disappointment at the appearance of the militia. They numbered but few of the trained Indian fighters of the frontier; many of them were hired substitutes; most of them were entirely unacquainted with Indian warfare, and were new to the life of the wilderness; and they were badly armed.[1] The Pennsylvanians were of even poorer stuff than the Kentuckians, numbering many infirm old men and many mere boys. They were undisciplined, with little regard for authority, and inclined to be disorderly and mutinous.

By the end of September one battalion of Pennsylvania, and three battalions of Kentucky,

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, vol. i., pp. 104, 105; Military Affairs, i., 20.

militia, had arrived, and the troops began their march to the Miami. All told, there were 1453 men, 320 being Federal troops and 1133 militia, many of whom were mounted; and there were three light brass field-pieces.[1] In point of numbers the force was amply sufficient for its work; but Harmar, though a gallant man, was not fitted to command even a small army against Indians, and the bulk of the militia, who composed nearly four fifths of his force, were worthless. A difficulty immediately occurred in choosing a commander for the militia. Undoubtedly the best one among their officers was Colonel John Hardin, who (like his fellow-Kentuckian, Colonel Scott) was a veteran of the Revolutionary War, and a man of experience in the innumerable deadly Indian skirmishes of the time. He had no special qualifications for the command of more than a handful of troops, but he was a brave and honorable man, who had done well in leading small parties of rangers against their red foes. Nevertheless, the militia threatened mutiny unless they were allowed to choose their own leader, and they chose a mere incompetent, a Colonel Trotter. Harmar yielded, for the home authorities had dwelt much on the necessity of his preventing friction between

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, i., p. 104; also p. 105. For this expedition, see also *Military Affairs*, i., pp. 20, 28, and Denny's "Military Journal," pp. 343, 354.

the regulars and the militia; and he had so little control over the latter, that he was very anxious to keep them good-humored. Moreover, the commissariat arrangements were poor. Under such circumstances, the keenest observers on the frontier foretold failure from the start.[1]

For several days the army marched slowly forward. The regular officers had endless difficulty with the pack-horsemen, who allowed their charges to stray or be stolen, and they strove to instruct the militia in the rudiments of their duties, on the march, in camp, and in battle. A fortnight's halting progress through the wilderness brought the army to a small branch of the Miami of the Lakes. Here a horse patrol captured a Maumee Indian, who informed his captors that the Indians knew of their approach and were leaving their towns. On hearing this an effort was made to hurry forward; but when the army reached the Miami towns, on October 17th, they had been deserted. They stood at the junction of two branches of the Miami, the St. Mary and the St. Joseph, about 170 miles from Fort Washington. The troops had marched about ten miles a day. The towns consisted of a couple of hundred wigwams, with some good log-huts; and there were gardens, orchards, and immense fields of corn.

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, i. Jno. O'Fallan to the President, Lexington, Ky., September 25, 1790.

All these the soldiers destroyed, and the militia loaded themselves with plunder.

On the 18th, Colonel Trotter was ordered out with three hundred men to spend a couple of days exploring the country, and finding out where the Indians were. After marching a few miles they came across two Indians. Both were killed by the advanced horsemen. All four of the field-officers of the militia—two colonels and two majors—joined helter-skelter in the chase, leaving their troops for half an hour without a leader. Apparrently satisfied with this feat, Trotter marched home, having accomplished nothing.

Much angered, Harmar gave the command to Hardin, who left the camp next morning with two hundred men, including thirty regulars. But the militia had turned sulky. They did not wish to go and they began to desert and return to camp immediately after leaving it. At least half of them had thus left him, when he stumbled on a body of about a hundred Indians. The Indians advanced firing, and the militia fled with abject cowardice, many not even discharging their guns. The thirty regulars stood to their work, and about ten of the militia stayed with them. This small detachment fought bravely, and was cut to pieces, but six or seven men escaping. Their captain, after valiant fighting, broke through the savages, and got into a swamp nearby. Here he hid,

and returned to camp next day; he was so near the place of the fight that he had seen the victory-dance of the Indians over their slain and mutilated foes.

This defeat took the heart out of the militia. The army left the Miami towns, and moved back a couple of miles to the Shawnee town of Chillicothe. A few Indians began to lurk about, stealing horses, and two of the militia captains determined to try to kill one of the thieves. Accordingly, at night-fall they hobbled a horse with a bell near a hazel thicket, in which they hid. Soon an Indian stalked up to the horse, whereupon they killed him, and brought his head into camp, proclaiming that it should at least be worth the price of a wolf-scalp.

Next day was spent by the army in completing the destruction of all the corn, the huts, and the belongings of the Indians. A band of a dozen warriors tried to harass one of the burning parties; but some of the mounted troops got on their flank, killed two and drove the others off, they themselves suffering no loss.

The following day, the 21st, the army took up the line of march for Fort Washington, having destroyed six Indian towns, and an immense quantity of corn. But Hardin was very anxious to redeem himself by trying another stroke at the Indians, who, he rightly judged, would gather at their towns as soon as the troops left.

Harmar also wished to revenge his losses, and to forestall any attempt of the Indians to harass his shaken and retreating forces. Accordingly, that night he sent back against the towns a detachment of four hundred men, sixty of whom were regulars, and the rest picked militia. They were commanded by Major Wyllys, of the regulars. It was a capital mistake of Harmar's to send off a mere detachment on such a business. He should have taken a force composed of all his regulars and the best of the militia, and led it in person.

The detachment marched soon after midnight, and reached the Miami at daybreak on October 22d. It was divided into three columns, which marched a few hundred yards apart, and were supposed to keep in touch with one another. The middle column was led by Wyllys in person, and included the regulars and a few militia. The rest of the militia composed the flank columns and marched under their own officers.

Immediately after crossing the Miami and reaching the neighborhood of the town, Indians were seen. The columns were out of touch, and both of those on the flanks pressed forward against small parties of braves, whom they drove before them up the St. Joseph. Heedless of the orders they had received, the militia thus pressed forward, killing and scattering the small parties in their front and losing all connection with the

middle column of regulars. Meanwhile the main body of the Indians gathered to assail this column, and overwhelmed it by numbers; whether they had led the militia away by accident or by design is not known. The regulars fought well and died hard, but they were completely cut off, and most of them, including their commander, were slain. A few escaped, and either fled back to camp or up the St. Joseph. Those who took the latter course met the militia returning and informed them of what had happened. Soon afterwards the victorious Indians themselves appeared, on the opposite side of the St. Joseph, and attempted to force their way across. But the militia were flushed by the easy triumph of the morning and fought well, repulsing the Indians, and finally forcing them to withdraw. They then marched slowly back to the Miami towns, gathered their wounded, arrayed their ranks, and rejoined the main army. The Indians had suffered heavily, and were too dispirited, both by their loss and by their last repulse, to attempt further to harass either this detachment or the main army itself on its retreat.

Nevertheless, the net result was a mortifying failure. In all, the regulars had lost 75 men killed and 3 wounded, while of the militia 28 had been wounded and 108 had been killed or were missing. The march back was very dreary; and the militia became nearly ungovernable, so that at one time

Harmar reduced them to order only by threatening to fire on them with the artillery.

The loss of all their provisions and dwellings exposed the Miami tribes to severe suffering and want during the following winter; and they had also lost many of their warriors. But the blow was only severe enough to anger and unite them, not to cripple or crush them. All the other western tribes made common cause with them. They banded together and warred openly; and their vengeful forays on the frontier increased in number, so that the suffering of the settlers was great. Along the Ohio people lived in hourly dread of tomahawk and scalping-knife; the attacks fell unceasingly on all the settlements, from Marietta to Louisville.

CHAPTER III

THE SOUTHWEST TERRITORY, 1788–1790

DURING the years 1788 and 1789 there was much disquiet and restlessness throughout the southwestern territory, the land lying between Kentucky and the southern Indians. The disturbances caused by the erection of the State of Franklin were subsiding, the authority of North Carolina was re-established over the whole territory, and by degrees a more assured and healthy feeling began to prevail among the settlers; but as yet their future was by no means certain, nor was their lot irrevocably cast in with that of their fellows in the other portions of the Union.

As already said, the sense of national unity among the frontiersmen was small. The men of the Cumberland, in writing to the Creeks, spoke of the Franklin people as if they belonged to an entirely distinct nation, and as if a war with or by one community concerned in no way the other [1];

[1] Robertson MSS. Robertson to McGillivray, Nashville, 1788. "Those aggressors live in a different state and are governed by different laws, consequently we are not culpable for their misconduct."

while the leaders of Franklin were carrying on with the Spaniards negotiations quite incompatible with the continued sovereignty of the United States. Indeed it was some time before the southwestern people realized that after the Constitution went into effect they had no authority to negotiate commercial treaties on their own account. Andrew Jackson, who had recently taken up his abode in the Cumberland country, was one of the many men who endeavored to convince the Spanish agents that it would be a good thing for both parties if the Cumberland people were allowed to trade with the Spaniards; in which event the latter would of course put a stop to the Indian hostilities.[1]

This dangerous loosening of the Federal tie shows that it would certainly have given way entirely had the population at this time been scattered over a wider territory. The obstinate and bloody warfare waged by the Indians against the frontiersmen was in one way of great service to the nation, for it kept back the frontier and forced the settlements to remain more or less compact and in touch with the country behind them. If the red men had been as weak as, for instance, the black fellows of Australia, the settlers would have

[1] Tennessee Historical Society MSS. Andrew Jackson to D. Smith, introducing the Spanish agent, Captain Fargo, February 13, 1789.

roamed hither and thither without regard to them, and would have settled, each man wherever he liked, across to the Pacific. Moreover, the Indians formed the bulwarks which defended the British and Spanish possessions from the adventurers of the border; save for the shield thus offered by the fighting tribes, it would have been impossible to bar the frontiersmen from the territory either to the north or to the south of the boundaries of the United States.

Congress had tried hard to bring about peace with the southern Indians, both by sending commissioners to them and by trying to persuade the three Southern States to enter into mutually beneficial treaties with them. A successful effort was also made to detach the Chickasaws from the others, and keep them friendly with the United States. Congress as usual sympathized with the Indians against the intruding whites, although it was plain that only by warfare could the red men be permanently subdued.[1]

The Cumberland people felt the full weight of the warfare, the Creeks being their special enemies. Robertson himself lost a son and a brother in the various Indian attacks. To him fell the task of

[1] State Department MSS., No. 180, p. 66; No. 151, p. 275. Also letters of Richard Winn to Knox, June 25, 1788; James White to Knox, August 1, 1788; Joseph Martin to Knox, July 25, 1788.

trying to put a stop to the ravages. He was the leader of his people in every way, their commander in war and their spokesman when they sought peace; and early in 1788 he wrote a long letter on their behalf to the Creek chief McGillivray. After disclaiming all responsibility for or connection with the Franklin men, he said that the settlers for whom he spoke had not had the most distant idea that any Indians would object to their settling on the Cumberland, in a country that had been purchased outright at the Henderson treaty. He further stated that he had believed the Creek chief would approve of the expedition to punish the marauders at the Muscle Shell Shoals, inasmuch as the Creeks had repeatedly assured him that these marauders were refractory people who would pay no heed to their laws and commands. Robertson knew this to be a good point, for as a matter of fact the Creeks, though pretending to be peaceful, had made no effort to suppress these banditti, and had resented by force of arms the destruction of their stronghold.[1]

Robertson then came to his personal wrongs. His quaintly worded letter runs in part: "I had the mortification to see one of my children Killed and uncommonly Massacred . . . from my earliest youth I have endeavored to arm myself

[1] Robertson MSS. Robertson to McGillivray. Letters already cited.

with a sufficient share of Fortitude to meet anything that Nature might have intended, but to see an innocent child so Uncommonly Massacred by people who ought to have both sense and bravery has in a measure unmanned me. . . . I have always striven to do justice to the red people; last fall, trusting in Cherokee friendship, I with utmost difficulty prevented a great army from marching against them. The return is very inadequate to the services I have rendered them as last summer they killed an affectionate brother and three days ago an innocent child." The letter concludes with an emphatic warning that the Indians must expect heavy chastisement if they do not stop their depredations.

Robertson looked on his own woes and losses with much of the stoicism for which his Indian foes were famed. He accepted the fate of his son with a kind of grim stolidity; and did not let it interfere with his efforts to bring about a peace. Writing to his friend General Martin, he said: "On my return home [from the North Carolina Legislature, to which he was a delegate] I found distressing times in the country. A number of persons have been killed since; among those unfortunate persons were my third son. . . . We sent Captains Hackett and Ewing to the Creeks who have brought very favorable accounts, and we do not doubt but a lasting peace will be shortly

concluded between us and that nation. The Cherokees we shall flog, if they do not behave well." [1] He wished to make peace if he could; but if that was impossible, he was ready to make war with the same stern acceptance of fate.

The letter then goes on to express the opinion that, if Congress does not take action to bring about a peace, the Creeks will undoubtedly invade Georgia with some five thousand warriors, for McGillivray has announced that he will consent to settle the boundary question with Congress, but will do nothing with Georgia. The letter shows, with rather startling clearness, how little Robertson regarded the Cumberland people and the Georgians as being both in the same nation; he saw nothing strange in one portion of the country concluding a firm peace with an enemy who was about to devastate another portion.

Robertson was anxious to encourage immigration, and for this purpose he had done his best to hurry forward the construction of a road between the Holston and the Cumberland settlements. In his letter to Martin he urged him to proclaim to possible settlers the likelihood of peace, and guaranteed that the road would be ready before winter. It was opened in the fall, and parties of settlers began to come in over it. To protect them, the

[1] State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. ii. Robertson to Martin, Pleasant Grove, May 7, 1788.

district from time to time raised strong guards of mounted riflemen to patrol the road, as well as the neighborhood of the settlements, and to convoy the immigrant companies. To defray the expenses of the troops, the Cumberland court raised taxes. Exactly as the Franklin people had taken peltries as the basis for their currency, so those of the Cumberland, in arranging for payment in kind, chose the necessaries of life as the best medium of exchange. They enacted that the tax should be paid: one quarter in corn, one half in beef, pork, bear-meat, and venison, one eighth in salt, and one eighth in money.[1] It was still as easy to shoot bear and deer as to raise hogs and oxen.

Robertson wrote several times to McGillivray, alone or in conjunction with another veteran frontier leader, Colonel Anthony Bledsoe. Various other men of note on the border, both from Virginia and North Carolina, wrote likewise. To these letters McGillivray responded promptly in a style rather more polished though less frank than that of his correspondents. His tone was distinctly more warlike and less conciliatory than theirs. He avowed, without hesitation, that the Creeks and not the Americans had been the original aggressors, saying that "my nation has waged war against your people for several years past; but that we had no motive of revenge, nor did it

[1] Ramsey, p. 504.

proceed from any sense of injuries sustained from your people, but being warmly attached to the British and being under their influence our operations were directed by them against you in common with other Americans." He then acknowledged that after the close of the war the Americans had sent overtures of peace, which he had accepted,—although as a matter of fact the Creeks never ceased their ravages,—but complained that Robertson's expedition against the Muscle Shoals again brought on war.[1]

There was, of course, nothing in this complaint of the injustice of Robertson's expedition, for the Muscle Shoal Indians had been constantly plundering and murdering before it was planned, and it was undertaken merely to put a stop to their ravages. However, McGillivray made adroit use of it. He stated that the expedition itself, carried on, as he understood it, mainly against the French traders, "was no concern of ours and would have been entirely disregarded by us; but in the execution of it some of our people were there, who went as well from motives of curiosity as to traffic in silverware, and six of whom were rashly killed by your men"[2]; and inasmuch as these slain men were prominent in different Creek towns, the deed

[1] State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. ii., p. 620. McGillivray to Bledsoe and Robertson; no date.

[2] *Ibid.*, p. 521. McGillivray's letter of April 17, 1788.

led to retaliatory raids. But now that vengeance had been taken, McGillivray declared that a stable peace would be secured, and he expressed "considerable concern" over the "tragical end" of Robertson's slain kinsfolk. As for the Georgians, he announced that if they were wise and would agree to an honorable peace he would bury the red hatchet, and if not then he would march against them whenever he saw fit.[1] Writing again at the end of the year, he reiterated his assurances of the peaceful inclinations of the Creeks, though their troubles with Georgia were still unsettled.[2]

Nevertheless, these peaceful protestations produced absolutely no effect upon the Indian ravages, which continued with unabated fury. Many instances of revolting brutality and aggression by the whites against the Cherokees took place in Tennessee, both earlier and later than this, and in eastern Tennessee at this very time; but the Cumberland people, from the earliest days of their settlement, had not sinned against the red men, while as regards all the Tennesseeans, the Creeks throughout this period appeared always, and the

[1] State Department MSS., No. 71, vol. ii., p. 625. McGillivray's letter of April 15, 1788.

[2] Robertson MSS. McGillivray to Robertson, December 1, 1788. This letter contains the cautious, non-committal answer to Robertson's letter in which the latter proposed that Cumberland should be put under Spanish protection; the letter itself McGillivray had forwarded to the Spaniards.

Cherokees appeared sometimes, as the wrong-doers, the men who began the long and ferocious wars of reprisal.

Robertson's companion, Bledsoe, was among the many settlers who suffered death in the summer of 1788. He was roused from sleep by the sound of his cattle running across the yard in front of the twin log-houses occupied by himself and his brother and their families. As he opened the door he was shot by Indians, who were lurking behind the fence, and one of his hired men was also shot down.[1] The savages fled, and Bledsoe lived through the night, while the other inmates of the house kept watch at the loopholes until day broke and the fear was passed. Under the laws of North Carolina at that time, all the lands went to the sons of a man dying intestate, and Bledsoe's wealth consisted almost exclusively in great tracts of land. As he lay dying in his cabin, his sister suggested to him that unless he made a will he would leave his seven daughters penniless; and so the will was drawn, and the old frontiersman signed it just before he drew his last breath, leaving each of his children provided with a share of his land.

In the following year, 1789, Robertson himself had a narrow escape. He was at work with some of his field hands in a clearing. One man was on guard and became alarmed at some sound; Rob-

[1] Putnam, 298.

ertson snatched up his gun, and, while he was peering into the woods, the Indians fired on him. He ran toward the station and escaped, but only at the cost of a bullet through the foot. Immediately sixty mounted riflemen gathered at Robertson's station, and set out after the fleeing Indians; but finding that in the thick wood they did not gain on their foes, and were hampered by their horses, twenty picked men were sent ahead. Among these twenty men was fierce, moody young Andrew Jackson. They found the Indians in camp, at daybreak, but fired from too great a distance; they killed one, wounded others, and scattered the rest, who left sixteen guns behind them in their flight.[1]

During these two years many people were killed, both in the settlements, on the trail through the woods, and on the Tennessee River, as they drifted down-stream in their boats. As always in these contests the innocent suffered with the guilty. The hideous border ruffians, the brutal men who murdered peaceful Indians in times of truce, and butchered squaws and children in time of war, fared no worse than unoffending settlers or men of mark who had been staunch friends of the Indian peoples. The legislatures of the seaboard States, and Congress itself, passed laws to punish men who committed outrages on the Indians, but

[1] Haywood, 244.

they could not be executed. Often the border people themselves interfered to prevent such outrages, or expressed disapproval of them, and rescued the victims; but they never visited the criminals with the stern and ruthless punishment which alone would have availed to check the crimes. For this failure they must receive hearty condemnation, and be adjudged to have forfeited much of the respect to which they were otherwise entitled by their strong traits, and their deeds of daring. In the same way, but to an even greater degree, the peaceful Indians always failed to punish or restrain their brethren who were bent on murder and plunder; and the braves who went on the war-path made no discrimination between good and bad, strong and weak, man and woman, young and old.

One of the sufferers was General Joseph Martin, who had always been a firm friend of the red race, and had earnestly striven to secure justice for them.[1] He had gone for a few days to his plantation on the borders of Georgia, and during his visit the place was attacked by a Creek war-party. They drove away his horses and wounded his overseer; but he managed to get into his house and stood at bay, shooting one warrior and beating off the others.

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, vol. i., Martin to Knox, January 15, 1789.

Among many attacks on the boats that went down the Tennessee it happens that a full record has been kept of one. A North Carolinian, named Brown, had served in the Revolutionary War with the troop of Light-Horse Harry Lee, and had received in payment a land certificate. Under this certificate he entered several tracts of western land, including some on the Cumberland; and in the spring of 1788 he started by boat down the Tennessee, to take possession of his claims. He took with him his wife and his seven children; and three or four young men also went along. When they reached the Chickamauga towns the Indians swarmed out towards them in canoes. On Brown's boat was a swivel, and with this and the rifles of the men they might have made good their defence, but as soon as the Indians saw them preparing for resistance they halted and hailed the crew, shouting that they were peaceful and that in consequence of the recent Holston treaties war had ceased between the white man and the red. Brown was not used to Indians; he was deceived, and before he made up his mind what to do the Indians were alongside, and many of them came aboard.[1] They then seized the boat and massacred the men,

[1] "Narrative" of Colonel Joseph Brown, *Southwestern Monthly*, Nashville, 1851, i., p. 14. The story was told when Brown was a very old man, and doubtless some of the details are inaccurate.

while the mother and children were taken ashore and hurried off in various directions by the Indians who claimed to have captured them. One of the boys, Joseph, long afterwards wrote an account of his captivity. He was not treated with deliberate cruelty, though he suffered now and then from the casual barbarity of some of his captors, and toiled like an ordinary slave. Once he was doomed to death by a party of Indians, who made him undress, so as to avoid bloodying his clothes; but they abandoned this purpose through fear of his owner, a half-breed and a dreaded warrior, who had killed many whites.

After about a year's captivity, Joseph and his mother and sisters were all released, though at different times. Their release was brought about by Sevier. When, in the fall of 1788, a big band of Creeks and Cherokees took Gillespie's station, on Little River, a branch of the upper Tennessee, they carried off a score of women and children. The four highest chiefs, headed by one with the appropriate name of Bloody Fellow, left behind a note addressed to Sevier and Martin, in which they taunted the whites with their barbarities, and especially with the murder of the friendly Cherokee chief Tassel, and warned them to move off the Indian land.[1] In response, Sevier made one of his swift raids, destroyed an Indian town on the

[1] Ramsey, 519.

Coosa River, and took prisoners a large number of Indian women and children. These were well treated, but were carefully guarded, and were exchanged for the white women and children who were in captivity among the Indians. The Browns were among the fortunate people who were thus rescued from the horrors of Indian slavery. It is small wonder that the rough frontier people, whose wives and little ones, friends and neighbors, were in such manner rescued by Nolichucky Jack, should have looked with leniency on their darling leader's shortcomings, even when these shortcomings took the form of failure to prevent or punish the massacre of friendly Indians.

The ravages of the Indians were precisely the same in character that they had always been, and always were until peace was won. There was the usual endless succession of dwellings burned, horses driven off, settlers slain while hunting or working, and immigrant parties ambushed and destroyed; and there was the same ferocious retaliation when opportunity offered. When Robertson's hopes of peace gave out he took steps to keep the militia in constant readiness to meet the foe; for he was the military commander of the district. The county lieutenants—there were now several counties on the Cumberland—were ordered to see that their men were well mounted and ready to march at a moment's notice; and were warned that this was a

duty to which they must attend themselves, and not delegate it to their subalterns. The laws were to be strictly enforced; and the subalterns were promptly to notify their men of the time and place to meet. Those who failed to attend would be fined by court-martial. Frequent private musters were to be held; and each man was to keep ready a good gun, nine charges of powder and ball, and a spare flint. It was especially ordered that every marauding band should be followed; for thus some would be overtaken and signally punished, which would be a warning to the others.[1]

The wrath of the Creeks was directed chiefly against the Georgians. The Georgians were pushing steadily westward, and were grasping the Creek hunting-grounds with ferocious greed. They had repeatedly endeavored to hold treaties with the Creeks. On each occasion the chiefs and warriors of a few towns met them, and either declined to do anything, or else signed an agreement which they had no power to enforce. A sample treaty of this kind was that entered into at Galphinton in 1785. The Creeks had been solemnly summoned to meet representatives both of the Federal Congress and of Georgia; but on the appointed day only two towns out of a hundred were represented. The Federal Commissioners thereupon declined to

[1] Robertson MSS., General Orders, April 5, 1789.

enter into negotiations; but those from Georgia persevered. By presents and strong drink they procured, and their government eagerly accepted, a large cession of land to which the two towns in question had no more title than was vested in all the others. The treaty was fraudulent. The Georgians knew that the Creeks who signed it were giving away what they did not possess; while the Indian signers cared only to get the goods they were offered, and were perfectly willing to make all kinds of promises, inasmuch as they had no intention whatever of keeping any of them. The other Creeks immediately repudiated the transaction, and the war dragged on its course of dismal savagery, growing fiercer year by year, and being waged on nearly even terms.[1]

Soon after the Constitution went into effect the National Government made a vigorous effort to conclude peace on a stable basis. Commissioners were sent to the southern Indians. Under their persuasion McGillivray and the leading kings and chiefs of the Muscogee confederacy came to New York and there entered into a solemn treaty. In this treaty the Creeks acknowledged the United States, to the exclusion of Spain, as the sole power with which they could treat; they covenanted to keep faith and friendship with the Americans; and in return for substantial payments and guaranties

[1] *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, vol. i., p. 15.

they agreed to cede some lands to the Georgians, though less than was claimed under the treaty of Galphinton.

This treaty was solemnly entered into by the recognized chiefs and leaders of the Creeks; and the Americans fondly hoped that it would end hostilities. It did nothing of the kind. Though the terms were very favorable to the Indians, so much so as to make the frontiersmen grumble, the Creeks scornfully repudiated the promises made on their behalf by their authorized representatives. Their motive in going to war, and keeping up the war, was not so much anger at the encroachments of the whites as the eager thirst for glory, scalps, and plunder, to be won at the expense of the settlers. The war-parties raided the frontier as freely as ever.[1] The simple truth was that the Creeks could be kept quiet only when cowed by physical fear. If the white men did not break the treaties, then the red men did. It is idle to dispute about the rights or wrongs of the contests. Two peoples, in two stages of culture which were separated by untold ages, stood face to face; one or the other had to perish, and the whites went forward from sheer necessity.

Throughout these years of Indian warfare the

[1] Robertson MSS., Williamson to Robertson, August 2, 1789, and August 7, 1790. *American State Papers*, Indian Affairs, i., 81. Milfort, 131, 142.

influx of settlers into the Holston and Cumberland regions steadily continued. Men in search of homes, or seeking to acquire fortunes by the purchase of wild lands, came more and more freely to the Cumberland country as the settlers therein increased in number and became better able to cope with and repel their savage foes. The settlements on the Holston grew with great rapidity as soon as the Franklin disturbances were at an end. As the people increased in military power, they increased also in material comfort and political stability. The crude social life deepened and broadened. Comfortable homes began to appear among the huts and hovels of the little towns. The outlying settlers still lived in wooden forts or stations; but where the population was thicker the terror of the Indians diminished, and the people lived in the ordinary style of frontier farmers.

Early in 1790, North Carolina finally ceded, and the National Government finally accepted, what is now Tennessee; and in May, Congress passed a law for the government of this Territory Southwest of the River Ohio, as they chose to call it. This law followed on the general lines of the Ordinance of 1787, for the government of the Northwest; but there was one important difference. North Carolina had made her cession conditional upon the non-passage of any law tending to emancipate slaves. At that time such a condition was

inevitable; but it doomed the Southwest to suffer under the curse of negro bondage.

William Blount, of North Carolina, was appointed governor of the territory, and at once proceeded to his new home to organize the civil government.[1] He laid out Knoxville as his capital, where he built a good house with a lawn in front. On his recommendation, Sevier was appointed Brigadier-General for the Eastern District and Robertson for the Western — the two districts known as Washington and Miro, respectively.

Blount was the first man of leadership in the West who was of Cavalier ancestry; for though so much is said of the Cavalier type in the Southern States it was everywhere insignificant in numbers, and comparatively few of the southern men of mark have belonged to it. Blount was really of Cavalier blood. He was descended from a Royalist baronet, who was roughly handled by the Cromwellians, and whose three sons came to America. One of them settled in North Carolina, near Albemarle Sound, and from him came the new governor of the southwestern territory. Blount was a good-looking, well-bred man, with cultivated tastes; but he was also a man of force and energy, who knew well how to get on with the backwoodsmen, so that he soon became popular among them.

[1] Blount MSS. Biography of Blount, in manuscript, compiled by one of his descendants from the family papers.

The West had grown with astonishing rapidity during the seven years following the close of the Revolutionary War. In 1790, there were in Kentucky nearly seventy-four thousand, and in the Southwest Territory nearly thirty-six thousand souls. In the Northwest Territory the period of rapid growth had not yet begun, and the old French inhabitants still formed the majority of the population.

The changes during these seven years had been vital. In the West, as elsewhere through the Union, the years succeeding the triumphant close of the Revolution were those which determined whether the victory was or was not worth winning. To throw off the yoke of the stranger was useless and worse than useless if we showed ourselves unable to turn to good account the freedom we had gained. Unless we could build up a great nation, and unless we possessed the power and self-restraint to frame an orderly and stable government, and to live under its laws when framed, the long years of warfare against the armies of the king were wasted and went for naught.

At the close of the Revolution the West was seething with sedition. There were three tasks before the Westerners; all three had to be accomplished, under pain of utter failure. It was their duty to invade and tame the shaggy wilderness; to drive back the Indians and their European allies,

and to erect free governments which should form parts of the indissoluble Union. If the spirit of sedition, of lawlessness, and of wild individualism and separatism had conquered, then our history would merely have anticipated the dismal tale of the Spanish-American republics.

Viewed from this standpoint the history of the West during these eventful years has a special and peculiar interest. The inflow of the teeming throng of settlers was the most striking feature; but it was no more important than the half-seen struggle in which the Union party finally triumphed over the restless strivers for disunion. The extent and reality of the danger are shown by the numerous separatist movements. The intrigues in which so many of the leaders engaged with Spain, for the purpose of setting up barrier States, in some degree feudatory to the Spaniards; the movement in Kentucky for violent separation from Virginia, and the more secret movement for separation from the United States; the turbulent career of the commonwealth of Franklin; the attitude of isolation of interest from all their neighbors assumed by the Cumberland settlers:—all these various movements and attitudes were significant of the looseness of the Federal tie, and were ominous of the anarchic violence, weakness, and misrule which would have followed the breaking of that tie.

The career of Franklin gave the clearest glimpse of what might have been; for it showed the gradual breaking down of law and order, the rise of factions ready to appeal to arms for success, the bitter broils with neighboring States, the reckless readiness to provoke war with the Indians, unheeding their rights or the woes such wars caused other frontier communities, and finally the entire willingness of the leaders to seek foreign aid when their cause was declining. Had not the Constitution been adopted, and a more perfect union been thus called into being, the history of the State of Franklin would have been repeated in fifty communities from the Alleghanies to the Pacific coast; only these little States, instead of dying in the bud, would have gone through a rank flowering period of bloody and aimless revolutions, of silly and ferocious warfare against their neighbors, and of degrading alliance with the foreigner. From these and a hundred other woes the West no less than the East was saved by the knitting together of the States into a nation.

This knitting process passed through its first and most critical stage, in the West, during the period intervening between the close of the war for independence, and the year which saw the organization of the Southwest into a Territory ruled under the laws, and by the agent, of the National Government. During this time no step was taken

towards settling the question of boundary lines with our British and Spanish neighbors; that remained as it had been, the Americans never abandoning claims which they had not yet the power to enforce, and which their antagonists declined to yield. Neither were the Indian wars settled; on the contrary, they had become steadily more serious, though for the first time a definite solution was promised by the active interference of the National Government. But a vast change had been made by the inflow of population; and an even vaster by the growing solidarity of the western settlements with one another, and with the Central Government. The settlement of the Northwest, so different in some of its characteristics from the settlement of the Southwest, had begun. Kentucky was about to become a State of the Union. The territories north and south of it were organized as part of the domain of the United States. The West was no longer a mere wilderness dotted with cabins and hamlets, whose backwoods builders were held by but the loosest tie of allegiance to any government, even their own. It had become an integral part of the mighty American Republic.

CHAPTER IV

ST. CLAIR'S DEFEAT, 1791

THE backwoods folk, the stark hunters and tree-fellers, and the war-worn regulars who fought beside them in the forest, pushed ever westward the frontier of the Republic. Year after year each group of rough settlers and rough soldiers wrought its part in the great epic of wilderness conquest.

The people that for one or more generations finds its allotted task in the conquest of a continent has before it the possibility of splendid victory, and the certainty of incredible toil, suffering, and hardship. The opportunity is great indeed; but the chance of disaster is even greater. Success is for a mighty race, in its vigorous and masterful prime. It is an opportunity such as is offered to an army by a struggle against a powerful foe; only by great effort can defeat be avoided, but triumph means lasting honor and renown.

As it is in the battle, so it is in the infinitely greater contests where the fields of fight are continents, and the ages form the measure of time. In actual life the victors win in spite of brutal

blunders and repeated checks. Watched nearby, while the fight stamps to and fro, the doers and the deeds stand out naked and ugly. We see all too clearly the blood and sweat, the craft and cunning and blind luck, the raw cruelty and stupidity, the shortcomings of heart and hand, the mad abuse of victory. Strands of meanness and cowardice are everywhere shot through the warp of lofty and generous daring. There are failures bitter and shameful side by side with feats of triumphant prowess. Of those who venture in the contest some achieve success; others strive feebly and fail ignobly.

If a race is weak, if it is lacking in the physical and moral traits which go to the makeup of a conquering people, it cannot succeed. For three hundred years the Portuguese possessed footholds in South Africa; but they left to the English and Dutch the task of building free communities able to hold in fact as well as in name the country south of the Zambesi. Temperate South America is as fertile and healthy for the white man as temperate North America, and is so much less in extent as to offer a far simpler problem of conquest and settlement; yet the Spaniard, who came to the Plata two centuries before the American backwoodsman reached the Mississippi, scarcely made as much progress in a decade as his northern rival did in a year.

The task must be given the race just at the time when it is ready for the undertaking. The whole future of the world would have been changed had the period of trans-oceanic expansion among the nations of Europe begun at a time when the Scandinavians or Germans were foremost in sea-trade and sea-war—if it had begun when the fleets of the Norsemen threatened all coasts, or when the Hanseatic league was in its prime. But in the actual event the days of Scandinavian supremacy at sea resulted in no spread of the Scandinavian tongue or culture; and the temporary maritime prosperity of the North German cities bore no permanent fruit of conquest for the German people. The only nations that profited by the expansion beyond the seas, and that built up in alien continents vast commonwealths, with the law, the language, the creed, and the culture, no less than the blood, of the parent stocks, were those that during the centuries of expansion, possessed power on the ocean,—Spain, Portugal, France, Holland, and, above all, England.

Even a strong race, in its prime, and given the task at the right moment, usually fails to perform it; for at the moment the immense importance of the opportunity is hardly ever understood, while the selfish interests of the individual and the generation are opposed to the interest of the race as a whole. Only the most far-seeing and high-minded

statesmen can grasp the real weight, from the race standpoint, of the possibilities which to the men of their day seem so trivial. The conquest and settlement rarely take place save under seldom-occurring conditions, which happen to bring about identity of interest between the individual and the race. Dutch seamen knew the coasts of Australia and New Zealand generations before they were settled by the English, and had the people of Holland willed to take possession of them, the Dutch would now be one of the leading races of mankind; but they preferred the immediate gains to be derived from the ownership of the trade with the Spice Islands; and so, for the unimportant overlordship of a few patches of tropical soil, they bartered the chance of building a giant Dutch Republic in the South Seas. Had the Swedish successors of Gustavus Adolphus devoted their energies to colonization in America, instead of squabbling with Slavs and Germans for one or two wretched Baltic provinces, they could undoubtedly have built up in the new world a Sweden tenfold greater than that in the old. If France had sent to her possessions in America as many colonists as she sent soldiers to war for petty townships in Germany and Italy, the French would now be masters of half the territory north of the Rio Grande. England alone, because of a combination of causes, was able to use aright the chances given

her for the conquest and settlement of the world's waste spaces; and in consequence the English-speaking peoples now have before them a future more important than that of all the continental European peoples combined.

It is natural that most nations should be thus blind to the possibilities of the future. Few indeed are the men who can look a score of years into the future, and fewer still those who will make great sacrifices for the real, not the fancied, good of their children's children; but in questions of race supremacy the look-ahead should be for centuries rather than decades, and the self-sacrifice of the individual must be for the good not of the next generation but perchance of the fourth or fifth in line of descent. The Frenchman and the Hollander of the seventeenth century could not even dimly see the possibilities that loomed vast and vague in the colonization of America and Australia; they did not have, and it was hardly possible that they should have, the remotest idea that it would be well for them to surrender, one the glory gained by his German conquests, the other the riches reaped from his East Indian trade, in order that three hundred years later huge unknown continents should be filled with French and Dutch commonwealths. No nation, taken as a whole, can ever see so far into the future; no nation, even if it could see such a future, would

ever sacrifice so much to win it. Hitherto each race in turn has expanded only because the interests of a certain number of individuals of many succeeding generations have made them active and vigorous agents in the work of expansion.

This indifference on the part of individuals to the growth of the race is often nearly as marked in new as in old communities, although the very existence of these new communities depends upon that growth. It is strange to see how the new settlers in the new land tend to turn their faces, not towards the world before them, but towards the world they have left behind. Many of them, perhaps most, wish rather to take parts in the struggles of the old civilized powers, than to do their share in laying the obscure but gigantic foundations of the empires of the future. The New Englander who was not personally interested in the lands beyond the Alleghanies often felt indifferent or hostile to the growth of the transmontane America; and in their turn these over-mountain men, these Kentuckians and Tennesseeans, were concerned to obtain a port at the mouth of the Mississippi rather than the right to move westward to the Pacific. There were more men in the new communities than in the old who saw, however imperfectly, the grandeur of the opportunity and of the race-destiny; but there were always very many who did their share in working

out their destiny grudgingly and under protest. The race as a whole, in its old homes and its new, learns the lesson with such difficulty that it can scarcely be said to be learnt at all until success or failure has done away with the need of learning it. But in the case of our own people, it has fortunately happened that the concurrence of the interests of the individual and of the whole organism has been normal throughout most of its history.

The attitude of the United States and Great Britain, as they faced one another in the western wilderness at the beginning of the year 1791, is but another illustration of the truth of this fact. The British held the lake posts, and more or less actively supported the Indians in their efforts to bar the Americans from the Northwest. Nominally, they held the posts because the Americans had themselves left unfulfilled some of the conditions of the treaty of peace; but this was felt not to be the real reason, and the Americans loudly protested that their conduct was due to sheer hatred of the young Republic. The explanation was simpler. The British had no far-reaching design to prevent the spread and growth of the English-speaking people on the American continent. They cared nothing, one way or the other, for that spread and growth, and it is unlikely that they wasted a moment's thought on

the ultimate future of the race. All that they desired was to preserve the very valuable fur trade of the region round the Great Lakes for their own benefit. They were acting from the motives of self-interest that usually control nations; and it never entered their heads to balance against these immediate interests the future of a nation many of whose members were to them mere foreigners.

The majority of the Americans, on their side, were exceedingly loth to enter into aggressive war with the Indians; but were reluctantly forced into the contest by the necessity of supporting the backwoodsmen. The frontier was pushed westward, not because the leading statesmen of America, or the bulk of the American people, foresaw the continental greatness of this country or strove for such greatness; but because the bordermen of the West, and the adventurous land-speculators of the East, were personally interested in acquiring new territory, and because, against their will, the governmental representatives of the nation were finally forced to make the interests of the Westerners their own. The people of the seaboard, the leaders of opinion in the coast towns and old-settled districts, were inclined to look eastward, rather than westward. They were interested in the quarrels of the Old-World nations; they were immediately concerned in the rights of the fisheries they jealously shared with England,

or the trade they sought to secure with Spain. They did not covet the Indian lands. They had never heard of the Rocky Mountains—nobody had as yet,—they cared as little for the Missouri as for the Congo, and they thought of the Pacific slope as a savage country, only to be reached by an ocean voyage longer than the voyage to India. They believed that they were entitled, under the treaty, to the country between the Alleghanies and the Great Lakes; but they were quite content to see the Indians remain in actual occupancy, and they had no desire to spend men and money in driving them out. Nevertheless, they were even less disposed to proceed to extremities against their own people, who in very fact were driving out the Indians; and this was the only alternative, for in the end they had to side with one or the other set of combatants.

The governmental authorities of the newly created Republic shared these feelings. They felt no hunger for the Indian lands, they felt no desire to stretch their boundaries and thereby add to their already heavy burdens and responsibilities. They wished to do strict justice to the Indians; the treaties they held with them were carried on with scrupulous fairness and were honorably lived up to by the United States officials. They strove to keep peace, and made many efforts to persuade the frontiersmen to

observe the Indian boundary lines, and not to intrude on the territory in dispute; and they were quite unable to foresee the rapidity of the nation's westward growth. Like the people of the eastern seaboard, the men high in governmental authority were apt to look upon the frontiersmen with feelings dangerously akin to dislike and suspicion. Nor were these feelings wholly unjustifiable. The men who settle in a new country, and begin subduing the wilderness, plunge back into the very conditions from which the race has raised itself by the slow toil of ages. The conditions cannot but tell upon them. Inevitably, and for more than one lifetime—perhaps for several generations—they tend to retrograde, instead of advancing. They drop away from the standard which highly civilized nations have reached. As with harsh and dangerous labor they bring the new land up towards the level of the old, they themselves partly revert to their ancestral conditions; they sink back towards the state of their ages-dead barbarian forefathers. Few observers can see beyond this temporary retrogression into the future for which it is a preparation. There is small cause for wonder in the fact that so many of the leaders of eastern thought looked with coldness upon the effort of the Westerners to push north of the Ohio.

Yet it was these western frontiersmen who were the real and vital factors in the solution of the

problems which so annoyed the British Monarchy and the American Republic. They eagerly craved the Indian lands; they would not be denied entrance to the thinly peopled territory wherein they intended to make homes for themselves and their children. Rough, masterful, lawless, they were neither daunted by the prowess of the red warriors whose wrath they braved, nor awed by the displeasure of the government whose solemn engagements they violated. The enormous extent of the frontier dividing the white settler from the savage, and the tangled inaccessibility of the country in which it everywhere lay, rendered it as difficult for the national authorities to control the frontiersmen as it was to chastise the Indians.

If the separation of interests between the thickly settled East and the sparsely settled West had been complete it may be that the East would have refused outright to support the West, in which case the advance would have been very slow and halting. But the separation was not complete. The frontiersmen were numerically important in some of the States, as in Virginia, Georgia, and even Pennsylvania and New York; and under a democratic system of government this meant that these States were more or less responsive to their demands. It was greatly to the interest of the frontiersmen that their demands should be gratified, while other citizens had no very concrete

concern in the matter one way or the other. In addition to this, and even more important was the fact that there were large classes of the population everywhere who felt much sense of identity with the frontiersmen, and sympathized with them. The fathers or grandfathers of these peoples had themselves been frontiersmen, and they were still under the influences of the traditions which told of a constant march westward through the vast forests, and a no less constant warfare with a hostile savagery. Moreover, in many of the communities there were people whose kinsmen or friends had gone to the border; and the welfare of these adventurers was a matter of more or less interest to those who had stayed behind. Finally, and most important of all, though the nation might be lukewarm originally, and might wish to prevent the settlers from trespassing on the Indian lands or entering into an Indian war, yet when the war had become of real moment and when victory was doubtful, the national power was sure to be used in favor of the hard-pressed pioneers. At first the authorities at the national capital would blame the whites, and try to temporize and make new treaties, or even threaten to drive back the settlers with a strong hand; but when the ravages of the Indians had become serious, when the bloody details were sent to homes in every part of the Union by letter after letter from the border, when

the little newspapers began to publish accounts of the worst atrocities, when the county lieutenants of the frontier counties were clamoring for help, when the Congressmen from the frontier districts were appealing to Congress, and the governors of the States whose frontiers were molested were appealing to the President—then the feeling of race and national kinship rose, and the Government no longer hesitated to support in every way the hard-pressed wilderness vanguard of the American people.

The situation had reached this point by the year 1791. For seven years the Federal authorities had been vainly endeavoring to make some final settlement of the question by entering into treaties with the northwestern and southwestern tribes. In the earlier treaties the delegates from the Continental Congress asserted that the United States were invested with the fee of all the land claimed by the Indians. In the later treaties the Indian proprietorship of the lands was conceded.[1] This concession at the time seemed important to the whites; but the Indians probably never understood that there had been any change of attitude; nor did it make any practical difference, for,

[1] *American State Papers*, vol. iv., Indian Affairs, i., p. 13. Letter of H. Knox, June 15, 1789. This is the lettering on the back of the volume, and for convenience it will be used in referring to it.

whatever the theory might be, the lands had eventually to be won, partly by whipping the savages in fight, partly by making it better worth their while to remain at peace than to go to war.

The Federal officials under whose authority these treaties were made had no idea of the complexity of the problem. In 1789 the Secretary of War, the New Englander Knox, solemnly reported to the President that, if the treaties were only observed and the Indians conciliated, they would become attached to the United States, and the expense of managing them, for the next half-century, would be only some fifteen thousand dollars a year.[1] He probably represented, not unfairly, the ordinary eastern view of the matter. He had not the slightest idea of the rate at which the settlements were increasing, though he expected that tracts of Indian territory would from time to time be acquired. He made no allowance for a growth so rapid that within the half-century six or eight populous States were to stand within the Indian-owned wilderness of his day. He utterly failed to grasp the central features of the situation, which were that the settlers needed the land, and were bound to have it, within a few years; and that the Indians would not give it up, under no matter what treaty, without an appeal to arms.

In the South the United States Commissioners,

[1] *American State Papers*, vol. iv., Indian Affairs, i., p. 13.

in endeavoring to conclude treaties with the Creeks and Cherokees, had been continually hampered by the attitude of Georgia and the Franklin frontiersmen. The Franklin men made war and peace with the Cherokees just as they chose, and utterly refused to be bound by the treaties concluded on behalf of the United States. Georgia played the same part with regard to the Creeks. The Georgian authorities paid no heed whatever to the desires of Congress, and negotiated on their own account a series of treaties with the Creeks at Augusta, Galphinton, and Shoulderbone, in 1783, 1785, and 1786. But these treaties amounted to nothing, for nobody could tell exactly which towns or tribes owned a given tract of land, or what individuals were competent to speak for the Indians as a whole; the Creeks and Cherokees went through the form of surrendering the same territory on the Oconee.[1] The Georgians knew that the Indians with whom they treated had no power to surrender the lands; but all they wished was some shadowy color of title, that might serve as an excuse for their seizing the coveted territory. On the other hand, the Creeks, loudly though they declaimed against the methods of the Georgian treaty-makers, themselves shamelessly disregarded the solemn engagements which their authorized

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 15. Letter of Knox, July 6, 1789.

representatives made with the United States. Moreover, their murderous forays on the Georgian settlers were often as unprovoked as were the aggressions of the brutal Georgia borderers.

The Creeks were prompt to seize every advantage given by the impossibility of defining the rights of the various component parts of their loosely knit confederacy. They claimed or disclaimed responsibility, as best suited their plans for the moment. When, at Galphinton, two of the Creek towns signed away a large tract of territory, McGillivray, the famous half-breed, and the other chiefs loudly protested that the land belonged to the whole confederacy, and that the separate towns could do nothing save by consent of all. But in May, 1787, a party of Creeks from the upper towns made an unprovoked foray into Georgia, killed two settlers, and carried off a negro and fourteen horses; the militia who followed them attacked the first Indians they fell in with—who happened to be from the lower towns—and killed twelve; whereupon the same chiefs disavowed all responsibility for the deeds of the upper town warriors, and demanded the immediate surrender of the militia who had killed the lower town people—to the huge indignation of the Governor of Georgia.[1]

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 31, 32, 33. Letter of Governor Matthews, August 4, 1787; etc.

The United States Commissioners were angered by the lawless greed with which the Georgians grasped at the Indian lands; and they soon found that though the Georgians were always ready to clamor for help from the United States against the Indians, in the event of hostilities, they were equally prompt to defy the United States authorities if the latter strove to obtain justice for the Indians, or if the treaties concluded by the Federal and the State authorities seemed likely to conflict.[1] The Commissioners were at first much impressed by the letters sent them by McGillivray, and the "talks" they received through the Scotch, French, and English half-breed interpreters [2] from the outlandishly named Muscogee chiefs—the Hallowing King of the War Towns, the Fat King of the White or Peace Towns, the White Bird King, the Mad Dog King, and many more. But they soon found that the Creeks were quite as much to blame as the Georgians, and were playing fast and loose with the United States, promising to enter into treaties, and then refusing to attend; their flagrant and unprovoked breaches of faith causing intense anger and mortification to the Commissioners, whose patient efforts to serve them were

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 49. Letter of Benjamin Hawkins and Andrew Pickens, December 30, 1785.

[2] *Ibid.*; *e. g.*, the letter of Galphin and Douzeazeaux, June 14, 1787.

so ill rewarded.[1] Moreover, to offset the Indian complaints of lands taken from them under fraudulent treaties, the Georgians submitted lists[2] of hundreds of whites and blacks killed, wounded, or captured, and of thousands of horses, horned cattle, and hogs butchered or driven off by Indian war-parties. The puzzled Commissioners having at first been inclined to place the blame of the failure of peace negotiations on the Georgians, next shifted the responsibility to McGillivray, reporting that the Creeks were strongly in favor of peace. The event proved that they were in error; for after McGillivray and his fellow-chiefs had come to New York, in the summer of 1790, and concluded a solemn treaty of peace, the Indians whom they nominally represented refused to be bound by it in any way, and continued without a change their war of rapine and murder.

In truth, the red men were as little disposed as the white to accept a peace on any terms that were possible. The Secretary of War, who knew nothing of Indians by actual contact, wrote that it would be indeed pleasing "to a philosophic mind to reflect that, instead of exterminating a part of the human race by our modes of population . . . we had imparted our knowledge of cultivation and the arts to the aboriginals of the country," thus

[1] *American State Papers* iv., 74, September 26, 1789.
[2] *Ibid.*, 77, October 5, 1789.

preserving and civilizing them[1]; and the public men who represented districts remote from the frontier shared these views of large, though vague, beneficence. But neither the white frontiersmen nor their red antagonists possessed "philosophic minds." They represented two stages of progress, ages apart; and it would have needed many centuries to bring the lower to the level of the higher. Both sides recognized the fact that their interests were incompatible; and that the question of their clashing rights had to be settled by the strong hand.

In the Northwest matters culminated sooner than in the Southwest. The Georgians, and the settlers along the Tennessee and Cumberland, were harassed rather than seriously menaced by the Creek war-parties; but in the North the more dangerous Indians of the Miami, the Wabash, and the Lakes gathered in bodies so large as fairly to deserve the name of armies. Moreover, the pressure of the white advance was far heavier in the North. The pioneers who settled in the Ohio basin were many times as numerous as those who settled on the lands west of the Oconee and north of the Cumberland, and were fed from States much more populous. The advance was stronger, the resistance more desperate; naturally, the open break occurred where the strain was most intense.

There was fierce border warfare in the South.

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 53, 57, 60, 77, 79, 81, etc.

In the North there were regular campaigns carried on, and pitched battles fought, between Federal armies as large as those commanded by Washington at Trenton or Greene at Eutaw Springs, and bodies of Indian warriors more numerous than had ever yet appeared on any single field.

The newly created Government of the United States was very reluctant to make formal war on the northwestern Indians. Not only were President Washington and the National Congress honorably desirous of peace, but they were hampered for funds, and dreaded any extra expense. Nevertheless, they were forced into war. Throughout the years 1789 and 1790 an increasing volume of appeals for help came from the frontier countries. The governor of the Northwestern Territory, the brigadier-general of the troops on the Ohio, the members of the Kentucky Convention, and all the county lieutenants of Kentucky, the lieutenants of the frontier counties of Virginia proper, the representatives from the counties, the field officers of the different districts, the General Assembly of Virginia, all sent bitter complaints and long catalogues of injuries to the President, the Secretary of War, and the two Houses of Congress—complaints which were redoubled after Harmar's failure. With heavy hearts the national authorities prepared for war.[1]

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 83, 94, 109, 111.

Their decision was justified by the redoubled fury of the Indian raids during the early part of 1791. Among others, the settlements near Marietta were attacked, a day or two after the new year began, in bitter winter weather. A dozen persons, including a woman and two children, were killed, and five men were taken prisoners. The New England settlers, though brave and hardy, were unused to Indian warfare. They were taken completely by surprise, and made no effective resistance; the only Indian hurt was wounded with a hatchet by the wife of a frontier hunter in the employ of the company.[1] There were some twenty-five Indians in the attacking party; they were Wyandots and Delawares, who had been mixing on friendly terms with the settlers throughout the preceding summer, and so knew how best to deliver the assault. The settlers had not only treated these Indians with much kindness, but had never wronged any of the red race; and had been lulled into a foolish feeling of security by the apparent good-will of the treacherous foes. The assault was made in the twilight, on the 2d of January, the Indians crossing the frozen Muskingum and stealthily approaching a blockhouse and two or three cabins. The inmates were frying meat for supper, and did not suspect harm, offering

[1] *The American Pioneer*, ii., 110. *American State Papers*, iv., 122.

food to the Indians; but the latter, once they were within doors, dropped the garb of friendliness and shot or tomahawked all save a couple of men who escaped and the five who were made prisoners. The captives were all taken to the Miami, or Detroit, and as usual were treated with much kindness and humanity by the British officers and traders with whom they came in contact. McKee, the British Indian agent, who was always ready to incite the savages to war against the Americans as a nation, but who was quite as ready to treat them kindly as individuals, ransomed one prisoner; the latter went to his Massachusetts home to raise the amount of his ransom, and returned to Detroit to refund it to his generous rescuer. Another prisoner was ransomed by a Detroit trader, and worked out his ransom in Detroit itself. Yet another was redeemed from captivity by the famous Iroquois chief Brant, who was ever a terrible and implacable foe, but a great-hearted and kindly victor. The fourth prisoner died; while the Indians took so great a liking to the fifth that they would not let him go, but adopted him into the tribe, made him dress as they did, and, in a spirit of pure friendliness, pierced his ears and nose. After Wayne's treaty he was released, and returned to Marietta to work at his trade as a stone mason, his bored nose and slit ears serving as mementos of his captivity.

The squalid little town of Cincinnati also suffered from the Indian war-parties in the spring of this year,[1] several of the townspeople being killed by the savages, who grew so bold that they lurked through the streets at nights, and lay in ambush in the gardens where the garrison of Fort Washington raised their vegetables. One of the Indian attacks, made upon a little palisaded "station," which had been founded by a man named Dunlop, some seventeen miles from Cincinnati, was noteworthy because of an act of not uncommon cruelty by the Indians. In the station there were some regulars. Aided by the settlers, they beat back their foes; whereupon the enraged savages brought one of their prisoners within earshot of the walls and tortured him to death. The torture began at midnight, and the screams of the wretched victim were heard until daylight.[2]

Until this year the war was not general. One of the most bewildering problems to be solved by the Federal officers on the Ohio was to find out which tribes were friendly and which hostile. Many of the inveterate enemies of the Americans were as forward in professions of friendship as the peaceful Indians, and were just as apt to be found at the treaties, or lounging about the settlements; and this widespread treachery and deceit made the

[1] *American Pioneer*, ii., 149.
[2] McBride, i., 88.

task of the army officers puzzling to a degree. As for the frontiersmen, who had no means whatever of telling a hostile from a friendly tribe, they followed their usual custom and lumped all the Indians, good and bad, together; for which they could hardly be blamed. Even St. Clair, who had small sympathy with the backwoodsmen, acknowledged [1] that they could not and ought not to submit patiently to the cruelties and depredations of the savages; "they are in the habit of retaliation, perhaps without attending precisely to the nations from which the injuries are received." said he. A long course of such aggressions and retaliations resulted, by the year 1791, in all the northwestern Indians going on the war-path. The hostile tribes had murdered and plundered the frontiersmen; the vengeance of the latter, as often as not, had fallen on friendly tribes; and these justly angered friendly tribes usually signalized their taking the red hatchet by some act of treacherous hostility directed against the settlers who had not molested them.

In the late winter of 1791, the hitherto friendly Delawares who hunted or traded along the western frontiers of Pennsylvania and Virginia proper took this manner of showing that they had joined the open foes of the Americans. A big band of warriors spread up and down the Alleghany for about

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 58.

forty miles, and on the 9th of February attacked all the outlying settlements. The Indians who delivered this attack had long been on intimate terms with the Alleghany settlers, who were accustomed to see them in and about their houses; and as the savages acted with seeming friendship to the last moment, they were able to take the settlers completely unawares, so that no effective resistance was made.[1] Some settlers were killed and some captured. Among the captives was a lad named John Brickell, who, though at first maltreated and forced to run the gauntlet, was afterwards adopted into the tribe, and was not released until after Wayne's victory. After his adoption, he was treated with the utmost kindness and conceived a great liking for his captors, admiring their many good qualities, especially their courage and their kindness to their children. Long afterwards he wrote down his experiences, which possess a certain value as giving, from the Indian standpoint, an account of some of the incidents of the forest warfare of the day.

The warriors who had engaged in this raid on their former friends, the settlers along the Alleghany, retreated two or three days' journey into the wilderness to an appointed place, where they found their families. One of the Girtys was with the Indians. No sooner had the last of the

[1] *American Pioneer*, i., 44; "Narrative" of John Brickell.

warriors come in, with their scalps and prisoners, including the boy Brickell, than ten of their number deliberately started back to Pittsburg, to pass themselves as friendly Indians, and trade. In a fortnight they returned, laden with goods of various kinds, including whisky. Some of the inhabitants, sore from disaster, suspected that these Indians were only masquerading as friendly, and prepared to attack them; but one of the citizens warned them of their danger and they escaped. Their effrontery was as remarkable as their treachery and duplicity. They had suddenly attacked and massacred settlers by whom they had never been harmed, and with whom they preserved an appearance of entire friendship up to the very moment of the assault. Then, their hands red with the blood of their murdered friends, they came boldly into Pittsburg, among the near neighbors of these same murdered men, and stayed there several days to trade, pretending to be peaceful allies of the whites. With savages so treacherous and so ferocious it was a mere impossibility for the borderers to distinguish the hostile from the friendly, as they hit out blindly to revenge the blows that fell upon them from unknown hands. Brutal though the frontiersmen often were, they never employed the systematic and deliberate bad faith which was a favorite weapon with even the best of the red tribes.

The people who were out of reach of the Indian tomahawk, and especially the Federal officers, were often unduly severe in judging the borderers for their deeds of retaliation. Brickell's narrative shows that the parties of seemingly friendly Indians who came in to trade were sometimes—and indeed in this year, 1791, it was probable they were generally—composed of Indians who were engaged in active hostilities against the settlers, and who were always watching for a chance to murder and plunder. On March 9th, a month after the Delawares had begun their attacks, the grim backwoods captain Brady, with some of his Virginian rangers, fell on a party of them who had come to a blockhouse to trade, and killed four. The Indians asserted that they were friendly, and both the Federal Secretary of War and the Governor of Pennsylvania denounced the deed, and threatened the offenders; but the frontiersmen stood by them.[1] Soon afterwards a delegation of chiefs from the Seneca tribe of the Iroquois arrived at Fort Pitt, and sent a message to the President, complaining of the murder of these alleged friendly Indians.[2] On the very day these Seneca chiefs started on

[1] State Department MSS., Washington Papers, Ex. C., p. 11, etc. Presly Neville to Richard Butler, March 19, 1791; Isaac Craig to Secretary of War, March 16, 1791; Secretary of War to President, March 31, 1791.

[2] *American State Papers*, iv., 145, Cornplanter and others to the President, March 17, 1791.

[illegible]

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[illegible]

war-parties, before the principal chiefs and headmen gathered to meet him. At last, on July 1st, they were all assembled; not only the Shawnees, Delawares, Wyandots, Ottawas, Pottawatamies and others who had openly taken the hatchet against the Americans, but also representatives of the Six Nations, and tribes of savages from lands so remote that they carried no guns, but warred with bows, spears, and tomahawks, and were clad in buffalo-robes instead of blankets. McKee, in his speech to them, did not incite them to war. On the contrary, he advised them, in guarded language, to make peace with the United States; but only upon terms consistent with their "honor and interest." He assured them that, whatever they did, he wished to know what they desired; and that the sole purpose of the British was to promote the welfare of the confederated Indians. Such very cautious advice was not of a kind to promote peace; and the goods furnished the savages at the council included not only cattle, corn, and tobacco, but also quantities of powder and balls.[1]

The chief interest of the British was to preserve the fur trade for their merchants, and it was mainly for this reason that they clung so tenaciously to the

[1] *Canadian Archives*, McKee's speech to the Indians, July 1, 1791; and Francis Lafontaine's account of sundries to Indians.

lake posts. For their purposes, it was essential that the Indians should remain lords of the soil. They preferred to see the savages at peace with the Americans, provided that in this way they could keep their lands; but, whether through peace or war, they wished the lands to remain Indian, and the Americans to be barred from them. While they did not at the moment advise war, their advice to make peace was so faintly uttered, and so hedged round with conditions as to be of no weight; and they furnished the Indians not only with provisions but with munitions of war. While McKee and other British officers were at the Miami Rapids, holding councils with the Indians, and issuing to them goods and weapons, bands of braves were continually returning from forays against the American frontier, bringing in scalps and prisoners; and the wilder subjects of the British King, like the Girtys, and some of the French from Detroit, went off with the war-parties on their forays.[1] The authorities at the capital of the new Republic were deceived by the warmth with which the British insisted that they were striving to bring about a peace; but the frontiersmen were not deceived, and they were right in

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 196. "Narrative" of Thomas Rhea, July 2, 1791. This narrative was distrusted; but it is fully borne out by McKee's letter and the "Narrative" of Brickell. He saw Brickell, whom he calls "Brittle," at the Miami.

their belief that the British were really the mainstay and support of the Indians in their warfare.

Peace could only be won by the unsheathed sword. Even the National Government was reluctantly driven to this view. As all the northwestern tribes were banded in open war, it was useless to let the conflict remain a succession of raids and counter-raids. Only a severe stroke, delivered by a formidable army, could cow the tribes. It was hopeless to try to deliver such a crippling blow with militia alone, and it was very difficult for the infant government to find enough money or men to equip an army composed exclusively of regulars. Accordingly, preparations were made for a campaign with a mixed force of regulars, special levies, and militia; and St. Clair, already Governor of the Northwestern Territory, was put in command of the army as Major-General.

Before the army was ready the Federal Government was obliged to take other measures for the defence of the border. Small bodies of rangers were raised from among the frontier militia, being paid at the usual rate for soldiers in the army, a net sum of about two dollars a month while in service. In addition, on the repeated and urgent request of the frontiersmen, a few of the most active hunters and best woodsmen, men like Brady, were enlisted as scouts, being paid six or eight times the ordinary rate. These men, because of their skill

in woodcraft and their thorough knowledge of Indian fighting, were beyond comparison more valuable than ordinary militia or regulars, and were prized very highly by the frontiersmen.[1]

Besides thus organizing the local militia for defence, the President authorized the Kentuckians to undertake two offensive expeditions against the Wabash Indians so as to prevent them from giving aid to the Miami tribes, whom St. Clair was to attack. Both expeditions were carried on by bands of mounted volunteers, such as had followed Clark on his various raids. The first was commanded by Brigadier-General Charles Scott; Colonel John Hardin led his advance guard, and Wilkinson was second in command. Towards the end of May, Scott crossed the Ohio, at the head of eight hundred horse-riflemen, and marched rapidly and secretly towards the Wabash towns. A mounted Indian discovered the advance of the Americans and gave the alarm; and so most of the Indians escaped just as the Kentucky riders fell on the town. But little resistance was offered by the surprised and outnumbered savages. Only five Americans were wounded, while of the Indians thirty-two were slain, as they fought or fled, and forty-one prisoners, chiefly women and children, were brought in, either by Scott himself or by his detachments under Hardin and Wilkinson. Sev-

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 107, January 5, 1791.

eral towns were destroyed, and the growing corn cut down. There were not a few French living in the town, in well-finished log-houses, which were burned with the wigwams.[1] The second expedition was under the command of Wilkinson, and consisted of over five hundred men. He marched in August, and repeated Scott's feats, again burning down two or three of the towns, and destroying the goods and the crops. He lost three or four men, killed or wounded, but killed ten Indians and captured some thirty.[2] In both expeditions the volunteers behaved well and committed no barbarous act, except that in the confusion of the actual onslaught two or three non-combatants were slain. The Wabash Indians were cowed and disheartened by their punishment, and in consequence gave no aid to the Miami tribes; but beyond this the raids accomplished nothing, and brought no nearer the wished-for time of peace.

Meanwhile, St. Clair was striving vainly to hasten the preparations for his own far more formidable task. There was much delay in forwarding him the men and the provisions and munitions. Congress hesitated and debated; the Secretary of War, hampered by a newly created office and insufficient means, did not show to advantage in

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 131, Scott's Report, June 28, 1791.

[2] *Ibid.*, Wilkinson's letter, August 24, 1791.

organizing the campaign, and was slow in carrying out his plans; while there was positive dereliction of duty on the part of the quartermaster, and the contractors proved both corrupt and inefficient. The army was often on short commons, lacking alike food for the men and fodder for the horses; the powder was poor, the axes useless, the tents and clothing nearly worthless; while the delays were so extraordinary that the troops did not make the final move from Fort Washington until mid-September.[1]

St. Clair himself was broken in health; he was a sick, weak, elderly man, high minded and zealous to do his duty, but totally unfit for the terrible responsibilities of such an expedition against such foes. The troops were of wretched stuff. There were two small regiments of regular infantry, the rest of the army being composed of six months' levies and of militia ordered out for this particular campaign. The pay was contemptible. Each private was given three dollars a month, from which ninety cents was deducted, leaving a net payment of two dollars and ten cents a month.[2] Sergeants netted three dollars and sixty cents; while the lieutenants received twenty-two, the

[1] *St. Clair Papers*, ii., 286, Report of Special Committee of Congress, March 27, 1792.

[2] *American State Papers*, iv., 118, Report of Secretary of War, January 22, 1791.

captains thirty, and the colonels sixty dollars. The mean parsimony of the nation in paying such low wages to men about to be sent on duties at once very arduous and very dangerous met its fit and natural reward. Men of good bodily powers, and in the prime of life, and especially men able to do the rough work of frontier farmers, could not be hired to fight Indians in unknown forests for two dollars a month. Most of the recruits were from the streets and prisons of the seaboard cities. They were hurried into a campaign against peculiarly formidable foes before they had acquired the rudiments of a soldier's training, and, of course, they never even understood what woodcraft meant.[1] The officers were men of courage, as in the end most of them showed by dying bravely on the field of battle; but they were utterly untrained themselves, and had no time in which to train their men. Under such conditions it did not need keen vision to foretell disaster. Harmar had learned a bitter lesson the preceding year; he knew well what Indians could do, and what raw troops could not; and he insisted with emphasis that the only possible outcome to St. Clair's expedition was defeat.

As the raw troops straggled to Pittsburg they were shipped down the Ohio to Fort Washington; and St. Clair made the headquarters of his army

[1] Denny's "Journal," 374.

at a new fort some twenty-five miles northward, which he christened Fort Hamilton. During September the army slowly assembled: two small regiments of regulars, two of six months' levies, a number of Kentucky militia, a few cavalry, and a couple of small batteries of light guns. After wearisome delays, due mainly to the utter inefficiency of the quartermaster and contractor, the start for the Indian towns was made on October the 4th.

The army trudged slowly through the deep woods and across the wet prairies, cutting out its own road, and making but five or six miles a day. It was in a wilderness which abounded with game; both deer and bear frequently ran into the very camps; and venison was a common food.[1] On October 13th, a halt was made to build another little fort, christened in honor of Jefferson. There were further delays, caused by the wretched management of the commissariat department, and the march was not resumed until the 24th, the numerous sick being left in Fort Jefferson. Then the army once more stumbled northward through the wilderness. The regulars, though mostly raw recruits, had been reduced to some kind of discipline;

[1] Bradley MSS. The "Journal and Letters" of Captain Daniel Bradley; shown me by the courtesy of his descendants, Mr. Daniel B. Bradley, of Southport, Conn., and Mr. Arthur W. Bradley, of Cincinnati, Ohio.

but the six months' levies were almost worse than the militia.[1] Owing to the long delays, and to the fact that they had been enlisted at various times, their terms of service were expiring day by day; and they wished to go home, and tried to, while the militia deserted in squads and bands. Those that remained were very disorderly. Two who attempted to desert were hung; and another, who shot a comrade, was hung also; but even this severity in punishment failed to stop the demoralization.

With such soldiers there would have been grave risk of disaster under any commander; but St. Clair's leadership made the risk a certainty. There was Indian sign, old and new, all through the woods; and the scouts and stragglers occasionally interchanged shots with small parties of braves, and now and then lost a man, killed or captured. It was, therefore, certain that the savages knew every movement of the army, which, as it slowly neared the Miami towns, was putting itself within easy striking range of the most formidable Indian confederacy in the Northwest. The density of the forest was such that only the utmost watchfulness could prevent the foe from approaching within arm's length unperceived. It behooved St. Clair to be on his guard, and he had been warned by Washington, who had never forgotten the scenes

[1] Denny, October 29, 1791, etc.

of Braddock's defeat, of the danger of a surprise. But St. Clair was broken down by the worry and by continued sickness; time and again it was doubtful whether he could so much as stay with the army. The second in command, Major-General Richard Butler, was also sick most of the time; and, like St. Clair, he possessed none of the qualities of leadership save courage. The whole burden fell on the Adjutant-General, Colonel Winthrop Sargent, an old Revolutionary officer; without him the expedition would probably have failed in ignominy even before the Indians were reached, and he showed not only cool courage but ability of a good order; yet in the actual arrangements for battle he was, of course, unable to remedy the blunders of his superiors.

St. Clair should have covered his front and flanks for miles around with scouting parties; but he rarely sent any out, and, thanks to letting the management of those that did go devolve on his subordinates, and to not having their reports made to him in person, he derived no benefit from what they saw. He had twenty Chickasaws with him; but he sent these off on an extended trip, lost touch of them entirely, and never saw them again until after the battle. He did not seem to realize that he was himself in danger of attack. When some fifty miles or so from the Miami towns, on the last day of October, sixty of the militia de-

serted; and he actually sent back after them one of his two regular regiments, thus weakening by one half the only trustworthy portion of his force.[1]

On November 3d, the doomed army, now reduced to a total of about fourteen hundred men, camped on the eastern fork of the Wabash, high up, where it was but twenty yards wide. There was snow on the ground and the little pools were skimmed with ice. The camp was on a narrow rise of ground, where the troops were cramped together, the artillery and most of the horse in the middle. On both flanks, and along most of the rear, the ground was low and wet. All around, the wintry woods lay in frozen silence. In front the militia were thrown across the creek, and nearly a quarter of a mile beyond the rest of the troops.[2] Parties of Indians were seen during the afternoon, and they skulked around the lines at night, so that the sentinels frequently fired at them; yet neither St. Clair nor Butler took any adequate measures to ward off the impending blow. It is improbable that, as things actually were at

[1] Bradley MSS. In his "Journal," Captain Bradley expresses his astonishment at seeing the regiment and his inability to understand the object in sending it back. Captain Bradley was not over-pleased with his life at the fort; as one of the minor ills, he mentions in one of his letters to Ebenezer Banks: "Please deliver the enclosed letter to my wife. Not a drop of cider have I drinked this twelve month."

[2] St. Clair's letter to the Secretary of War, November 9, 1791.

this time, they could have won a victory over their terrible foes; but they might have avoided overwhelming disaster.

On November 4th, the men were under arms, as usual, by dawn, St. Clair intending to throw up entrenchments and then make a forced march in light order against the Indian towns. But he was forestalled. Soon after sunrise, just as the men were dismissed from parade, a sudden assault was made upon the militia, who lay unprotected beyond the creek. The unexpectedness and fury of the onset, the heavy firing, and the appalling whoops and yells of the throngs of painted savages threw the militia into disorder. After a few moments' resistance, they broke and fled in wild panic to the camp of the regulars, among whom they drove in a frightened herd, spreading dismay and confusion.

The drums beat, and the troops sprang to arms, as soon as they heard the heavy firing at the front; and their volleys for a moment checked the onrush of the plumed woodland warriors. But the check availed nothing. The braves filed off to one side and the other, completely surrounded the camp, killed or drove in the guards and pickets, and then advanced close to the main lines.[1]

A furious battle followed. After the first onset the Indians fought in silence, no sound coming

[1] Denny, November 4th; also p. 221.

from them save the incessant rattle of their fire, as they crept from log to log, from tree to tree, ever closer and closer. The soldiers stood in close order, in the open; their musketry and artillery fire made a tremendous noise, but did little damage to a foe they could hardly see. Now and then, through the hanging smoke terrible figures flitted, painted black and red, the feathers of the hawk and eagle braided in their long scalp-locks; but save for these glimpses, the soldiers knew the presence of their sombre enemy only from the fearful rapidity with which their comrades fell dead and wounded in the ranks. They never even knew the numbers or leaders of the Indians. At the time it was supposed that they outnumbered the whites; but it is probable that the reverse was the case, and it may even be that they were not more than half as numerous. It is said that the chief who led them, both in council and battle, was Little Turtle, the Miami. At any rate, there were present all the chiefs and picked warriors of the Delawares, Shawnees, Wyandots, and Miamis, and all the most reckless and adventurous young braves from among the Iroquois and the Indians of the upper lakes, as well as many of the ferocious whites and half-breeds who dwelt in the Indian villages.

The Indians fought with the utmost boldness and ferocity, and with the utmost skill and caution.

Under cover of the smoke of the heavy but harmless fire from the army, they came up so close that they shot the troops down as hunters slaughter a herd of standing buffalo. Watching their chance, they charged again and again with the tomahawk, gliding into close quarters while their bewildered foes were still blindly firing into the smoke-shrouded woods. The men saw no enemy as they stood in the ranks to load and shoot; in a moment, without warning, dark faces frowned through the haze, the war-axes gleamed, and on the frozen ground the weapons clattered as the soldiers fell. As the comrades of the fallen sprang forward to avenge them, the lithe warriors vanished as rapidly as they had appeared; and once more the soldiers saw before them only the dim forest and the shifting smoke-wreaths, with vague half-glimpses of the hidden foe, while the steady singing of the Indian bullets never ceased, and on every hand the bravest and steadiest fell, one by one.

At first the army as a whole fought firmly; indeed, there was no choice, for it was ringed by a wall of flame. The officers behaved very well, cheering and encouraging their men; but they were the special targets of the Indians, and fell rapidly. St. Clair and Butler, by their cool fearlessness in the hour of extreme peril, made some amends for their shortcomings as commanders.

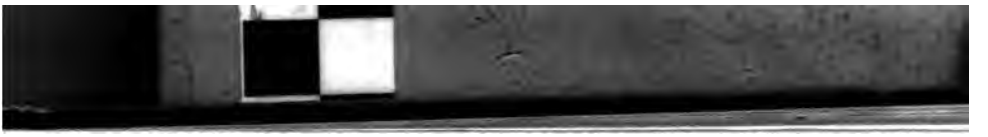
They walked up and down the lines, from flank to flank, passing and repassing one another; for the two lines of battle were facing outward, and each general was busy trying to keep his wing from falling back. St. Clair's clothes were pierced by eight bullets, but he was himself untouched. He wore a blanket coat with a hood; he had a long queue, and his thick gray hair flowed from under his three-cornered hat; a lock of his hair was carried off by a bullet.[1] Several times he headed the charges, sword in hand. General Butler had his arm broken early in the fight, but he continued to walk to and fro along the line, his coat off and the wounded arm in a sling. Another bullet struck him in the side, inflicting a mortal wound; and he was carried to the middle of the camp, where he sat propped up by knapsacks. Men and horses were falling around him at every moment. St. Clair sent an aide, Lieutenant Ebenezer Denny, to ask how he was; he displayed no anxiety, and answered that he felt well. While speaking, a young cadet, who stood nearby, was hit on the kneecap by a spent ball, and at the shock cried aloud; whereat the General laughed so that his wounded side shook. The aide left him; and

[1] McBride's *Pioneer Biography*, i., 165. "Narrative" of Thomas Irwin, a packer, who was in the fight. There are, of course, discrepancies between the various accounts; in the confusion of such a battle even the most honest eye-witnesses could not see all things alike.

there is no further certain record of his fate except that he was slain; but it is said that in one of the Indian rushes a warrior bounded towards him and sunk the tomahawk in his brain before any one could interfere.

Instead of being awed by the bellowing artillery, the Indians made the gunners a special object of attack. Man after man was picked off, until every officer was killed but one, who was wounded; and most of the privates also were slain or disabled. The artillery was thus almost silenced, and the Indians, emboldened by success, swarmed forward and seized the guns, while at the same time a part of the left wing of the army began to shrink back. But the Indians were now on comparatively open ground, where the regulars could see them and get at them; and under St. Clair's own leadership the troops rushed fiercely at the savages, with fixed bayonets, and drove them back to cover. By this time the confusion and disorder were great; while from every hollow and grass patch, from behind every stump and tree and fallen log, the Indians continued their fire. Again and again the officers led forward the troops in bayonet charges; and at first the men followed them with a will. Each charge seemed for a moment to be successful, the Indians rising in swarms and running in headlong flight from the bayonets. In one of the earliest, in which Colonel

"Man after Man was Picked off."



Darke led his battalion, the Indians were driven several hundred yards, across the branch of the Wabash; but when the Colonel halted and rallied his men, he found the savages had closed in behind him, and he had to fight his way back, while the foe he had been driving at once turned and harassed his rear. He was himself wounded, and lost most of his command. On re-entering camp he found the Indians again in possession of the artillery and baggage, from which they were again driven; they had already scalped the slain who lay about the guns. Major Thomas Butler had his thigh broken by a bullet; but he continued on horseback, in command of his battalion, until the end of the fight, and led his men in one of the momentarily successful bayonet charges. The only regular regiment present lost every officer, killed or wounded. The commander of the Kentucky militia, Colonel Oldham, was killed early in the action, while trying to rally his men and damning them for cowards.

The charging troops could accomplish nothing permanent. The men were too clumsy and ill-trained in forest warfare to overtake their fleet, half-naked antagonists. The latter never received the shock; but though they fled they were nothing daunted, for they turned the instant the battalion did and followed, firing. They skipped out of reach of the bayonets, and came back as they

pleased; and they were only visible when raised by a charge.

Among the pack-horsemen were some who were accustomed to the use of the rifle and to life in the woods; and these fought well. One, named Benjamin Van Cleve, kept a journal, in which he described what he saw of the fight.[1] He had no gun, but five minutes after the firing began he saw a soldier near him with his arm swinging useless, and he borrowed the wounded man's musket and cartridges. The smoke had settled to within three feet of the ground, so he knelt, covering himself behind a tree, and only fired when he saw an Indian's head, or noticed one running from cover to cover. He fired away all his ammunition, and the bands of his musket flew off; he picked up another just as two levy officers ordered a charge, and followed the charging party at a run. By this time the battalions were broken, and only some thirty men followed the officers. The Indians fled before the bayonets until they reached a ravine filled with down timber; whereupon they halted behind the impenetrable tangle of fallen logs. The soldiers also halted, and were speedily swept away by the fire of the Indians, whom they could not reach; but Van Cleve, showing his skill as a woodsman, covered himself behind a small tree, and gave back shot for shot until all his ammunition was gone.

[1] *American Pioneer*, ii., 150; Van Cleve's memoranda.

Before this happened his less skilful companions had been slain or driven off, and he ran at full speed back to camp. Here he found that the artillery had been taken and re-taken again and again. Stricken men lay in heaps everywhere, and the charging troops were once more driving the Indians across the creek in front of the camp. Van Cleve noticed that the dead officers and soldiers who were lying about the guns had all been scalped and that "the Indians had not been in a hurry, for their hair was all skinned off." Another of the packers who took part in the fight, one Thomas Irwin, was struck with the spectacle offered by the slaughtered artillerymen, and with grewsome homeliness compared the reeking heads to pumpkins in a December corn-field.

As the officers fell the soldiers, who at first stood up bravely enough, gradually grew disheartened. No words can paint the hopelessness and horror of such a struggle as that in which they were engaged. They were hemmed in by foes who showed no mercy and whose blows they could in no way return. If they charged they could not overtake the Indians; and the instant the charge stopped the Indians came back. If they stood they were shot down by an unseen enemy; and there was no stronghold, no refuge to which to flee. The Indian attack was relentless, and could neither be avoided, parried, nor met by counter assault.

For two hours or so the troops kept up a slowly lessening resistance; but by degrees their hearts failed. The wounded had been brought towards the middle of the lines, where the baggage and tents were, and an ever-growing proportion of unwounded men joined them. In vain the officers tried, by encouragement, by jeers, by blows, to drive them back to the fight. They were unnerved. As in all cases where large bodies of men are put in imminent peril of death, whether by shipwreck, plague, fire, or violence, numbers were swayed by a mad panic of utterly selfish fear, and others became numbed and callous, or snatched at any animal gratification during their last moments. Many soldiers crowded round the fires and stood stunned and confounded by the awful calamity; many broke into the officers' marquees and sought for drink, or devoured the food which the rightful owners had left when the drums beat to arms.

There was but one thing to do. If possible, the remnant of the army must be saved, and it could only be saved by instant flight, even at the cost of abandoning the wounded. The broad road by which the army had advanced was the only line of retreat. The artillery had already been spiked and abandoned. Most of the horses had been killed, but a few were still left, and on one of these St. Clair mounted. He gathered together those

fragments of the different battalions which contained the few men who still kept heart and head, and ordered them to charge and regain the road from which the savages had cut them off. Repeated orders were necessary before some of the men could be roused from their stupor sufficiently to follow the charging party; and they were only induced to move when told that it was to retreat.

Colonel Darke and a few officers placed themselves at the head of the column, the coolest and boldest men drew up behind them, and they fell on the Indians with such fury as to force them back well beyond the road. This made an opening through which, said Van Cleve the packer, the rest of the troops "pressed like a drove of bullocks." The Indians were surprised by the vigor of the charge, and puzzled as to its object. They opened out on both sides and half the men had gone through before they fired more than a chance shot or two. They then fell on the rear, and began a hot pursuit. St. Clair sent his aide, Denny, to the front to try to keep order, but neither he nor any one else could check the flight. Major Clark tried to rally his battalion to cover the retreat, but he was killed and the effort abandoned.

There never was a wilder rout. As soon as the men began to run, and realized that in flight there lay some hope of safety, they broke into a stampede which soon became uncontrollable. Horses,

soldiers, and the few camp followers and women who had accompanied the army were all mixed together. Neither command nor example had the slightest weight; the men were abandoned to the terrible selfishness of utter fear. They threw away their weapons as they ran. They thought of nothing but escape, and fled in a huddle, the stronger and the few who had horses trampling their way to the front through the old, the weak, and the wounded; while behind them raged the Indian tomahawk. Fortunately, the attraction of plundering the camp was so overpowering that the savages only followed the army about four miles; otherwise, hardly a man would have escaped.

St. Clair was himself in much danger, for he tried to stay behind and stem the torrent of fugitives; but he failed, being swept forward by the crowd, and when he attempted to ride to the front to rally them, he failed again, for his horse could not be pricked out of a walk. The packer, Van Cleve, in his journal, gives a picture of the flight. He was himself one of the few who lost neither courage nor generosity in the rout.

Among his fellow-packers were his uncle and a young man named Bonham, who was his close and dear friend. The uncle was shot in the wrist, the ball lodging near his shoulder; but he escaped. Bonham, just before the retreat began, was shot

through both hips, so that he could not walk. Young Van Cleve got him a horse, on which he was with difficulty mounted; then, as the flight began, Bonham bade Van Cleve look to his safety, as he was on foot, and the two separated. Bonham rode until the pursuit had almost ceased; then, weak and crippled, he was thrown off his horse and slain. Meanwhile, Van Cleve ran steadily on foot. By the time he had gone two miles most of the mounted men had passed him. A boy, on the point of falling from exhaustion, now begged his help; and the kind-hearted backwoodsman seized the lad and pulled him along nearly two miles farther, when he himself became so worn out that he nearly fell. There were still two horses in the rear, one carrying three men, and one two; and behind the latter Van Cleve, summoning his strength, threw the boy, who escaped. Nor did Van Cleve's pity for his fellows cease with this; for he stopped to tie his handkerchief around the knee of a wounded man. His violent exertions gave him a cramp in both thighs, so that he could barely walk; and in consequence the strong and active passed him until he was within a hundred yards of the rear, where the Indians were tomahawking the old and wounded men. So close were they that for a moment his heart sunk in despair; but he threw off his shoes, the touch of the cold ground seemed

to revive him, and he again began to trot forward. He got around a bend in the road, passing half a dozen other fugitives; and long afterwards he told how well he remembered thinking that it would be some time before they would all be massacred and his own turn came. However, at this point the pursuit ceased, and a few miles farther on he had gained the middle of the flying troops, and, like them, came to a walk. He fell in with a queer group, consisting of the sole remaining officer of the artillery, an infantry corporal, and a woman called Red-headed Nance. Both of the latter were crying, the corporal for the loss of his wife, the woman for the loss of her child. The worn-out officer hung on the corporal's arm, while Van Cleve "carried his fusee and accoutrements and led Nance; and in this sociable way arrived at Fort Jefferson a little after sunset."

Before reaching Fort Jefferson the wretched army encountered the regular regiment which had been so unfortunately detached a couple of days before the battle. The most severely wounded were left in the fort[1]; and then the flight was renewed, until the disorganized and half-armed rabble reached Fort Washington, and the mean log-huts of Cincinnati. Six hundred and thirty men

[1] Bradley MSS. The addition of two hundred sick and wounded brought the garrison to such short commons that they had to slaughter the pack-horses for food.

had been killed and over two hundred and eighty wounded; less than five hundred, only about a third of the whole number engaged in the battle, remained unhurt. But one or two were taken prisoners, for the Indians butchered everybody, wounded or unwounded, who fell into their hands. There is no record of the torture of any of the captives, but there was one singular instance of cannibalism. The savage Chippewas, from the far-off North, devoured one of the slain soldiers, probably in a spirit of ferocious bravado; the other tribes expressed horror at the deed.[1] The Indians were rich with the spoil. They got horses, tents, guns, axes, powder, clothing, and blankets—in short, everything their hearts prized. Their loss was comparatively slight; it may not have been one twentieth that of the whites. They did not at the moment follow up their victory, each band going off with its own share of the booty. But the triumph was so overwhelming, and the reward so great, that the war spirit received a great impetus in all the tribes. The bands of warriors that marched against the frontier were more numerous, more formidable, and bolder than ever.

In the following January, Wilkinson, with a hundred and fifty mounted volunteers, marched to the battle-field to bury the slain. The weather was bitterly cold, snow lay deep on the ground, and

[1] Brickell's "Narrative."

some of the volunteers were frost-bitten.[1] Four miles from the scene of the battle, where the pursuit had ended, they began to find the bodies on the road, and close alongside in the woods, whither some of the hunted creatures had turned at the last, to snatch one more moment of life. Many had been dragged from under the snow and devoured by wolves. Others lay where they had fallen, showing as mounds through the smooth white mantle that covered them. On the battlefield itself the slain lay thick—scalped, and stripped of all their clothing which the conquerors deemed worth taking. The bodies, blackened by frost and exposure, could not be identified; and they were buried in a shallow trench in the frozen ground. The volunteers then marched home.

When the remnant of the defeated army reached the banks of the Ohio, St. Clair sent his aide, Denny, to carry the news to Philadelphia, at that time the national capital. The river was swollen, there were incessant snow-storms, and ice formed heavily, so that it took twenty days of toil and cold before Denny reached Wheeling and got horses. For ten days more he rode over the bad

[1] McBride's *Pioneer Biography*, John Reily's "Narrative." This expedition, in which not a single hostile Indian was encountered, has been transmuted by Withers and one or two other border historians into a purely fictitious expedition of revenge in which hundreds of Indians were slain on the field of St. Clair's disaster.

winter roads, reaching Philadelphia with the evil tidings on the evening of December 19th. It was thus six weeks after the defeat of the army before the news was brought to the anxious Federal authorities.

The young officer called first on the Secretary of War; but as soon as the Secretary realized the importance of the information he had it conveyed to the President. Washington was at dinner, with some guests, and was called from the table to listen to the tidings of ill fortune. He returned with unmoved face, and at the dinner, and at the reception which followed, he behaved with his usual stately courtesy to those whom he was entertaining, not so much as hinting at what he had heard. But when the last guest had gone, his pent-up wrath broke forth in one of those fits of volcanic fury which sometimes shattered his iron outward calm. Walking up and down the room he burst out in wild regret for the rout and disaster, and bitter invective against St. Clair, reciting how, in that very room, he had wished the unfortunate commander success and honor and had bidden him above all things beware of a surprise.[1] "He went

[1] Tobias Lear, Washington's private secretary, as quoted by both Custis and Rush. The report of an eyewitness. See also Lodge's *Washington*, p. 94. Denny, in his "Journal," merely mentions that he went at once to the Secretary of War's office on the evening of the 19th, and does not speak of seeing Washington until the following morning. On the

off with that last solemn warning thrown into his ears," spoke Washington, as he strode to and fro, "and yet to suffer that army to be cut to pieces, hacked, butchered, tomahawked, by a surprise, the very thing I guarded him against! O God, O God, he 's worse than a murderer! How can he answer it to his country!" Then, calming himself by a mighty effort: "General St. Clair shall have justice . . . he shall have full justice." And St. Clair did receive full justice, and mercy too, from both Washington and Congress. For the sake of his courage and honorable character, they held him guiltless of the disaster for which his lack of capacity as a general was so largely accountable.

Washington and his administration were not free from blame. It was foolish to attempt the campaign against the northwestern Indians with men who had only been trained for six months, and who were enlisted at the absurd price of two

strength of this omission one or two of St. Clair's apologists have striven to represent the whole account of Washington's wrath as apocryphal; but the attempt is puerile; the relation comes from an eyewitness who had no possible motive to distort the facts. The Secretary of War, Knox, was certain to inform Washington of the disaster the very evening he heard of it; and whether he sent Denny or another messenger, or went himself, is unimportant. Lear might very well have been mistaken as to the messenger who brought the news; but he could not have been mistaken about Washington's speech.

dollars a month. Moreover, there were needless delays in forwarding the troops to Fort Washington; and the commissary department was badly managed. Washington was not directly responsible for any of these shortcomings; he very wisely left to the Secretary of War, Knox, the immediate control of the whole matter, seeking to avoid all interference with him, so that there might be no clashing or conflict of authority [1]; but he was, of course, ultimately responsible for the little evil, no less than for the great good, done by his administration.

The chief blunder was the selection of St. Clair. As a commander, he erred in many ways. He did not, or could not, train his troops; and he had no business to challenge a death fight with raw levies. It was unpardonable of him to send back one of his two regular regiments, the only trustworthy portion of his force, on the eve of the battle. He should never have posted the militia, his poorest troops, in the most exposed situation. Above all, he should have seen that the patrols and pickets were so numerous, and performed their duty so faithfully, as to preclude the possibility of surprise. With the kind of army furnished him, he could hardly have won a victory under any circumstances; but the overwhelming nature of the defeat was mainly due to his incompetence.

[1] State Department MSS., Washington Papers. War Department Ex. C., Washington to Knox, April 1, 1791.

CHAPTER V

MAD ANTHONY WAYNE AND THE FIGHT OF THE FALLEN TIMBERS, 1792–1795

THE United States Government was almost as much demoralized by St. Clair's defeat as was St. Clair's own army. The loosely knit nation was very poor, and very loath to undertake any work which involved sustained effort and pecuniary sacrifice, while each section was jealous of every other and was unwilling to embark in any enterprise unlikely to inure to its own immediate benefit. There was little national glory or reputation to be won by even a successful Indian war; while another defeat might prove a serious disaster to a government which was as yet far from firm in its seat. The eastern people were lukewarm about a war in which they had no direct interest; and the foolish frontiersmen, instead of backing up the administration, railed at it and persistently supported the party which desired so to limit the powers and energies of the National Government as to produce mere paralysis. Under such conditions the national administration, instead of at once redoubling its efforts

to ensure success by shock of arms, was driven to the ignoble necessity of yet again striving for a hopeless peace.

It would be impossible to paint in too vivid colors the extreme reluctance of the Government to enter into, or to carry on, war with the Indians. It was only after every other shift had been vainly tried that resort was had to the edge of the sword. The United States would gladly have made a stable peace on honorable terms, and strove with weary patience to bring about a friendly understanding. But all such efforts were rendered abortive, partly by the treachery and truculence of the savages, who could only be cowed by a thorough beating, and partly by the desire of the settlers for lands which the red men claimed as their hunting-grounds.

In pursuance of their timidly futile policy of friendliness, the representatives of the National Government, in the spring of 1792, sent peace envoys, with a flag of truce, to the hostile tribes. The unfortunate ambassadors thus chosen for sacrifice were Colonel John Hardin, the gallant but ill-starred leader of Kentucky horse, who had so often and with such various success encountered the Indians on the field of battle; and a Federal officer, Major Alexander Trueman. In June they started towards the hostile towns, with one or two companions, and soon fell in with some Indians,

who on being shown the white flag, and informed of the object of their visit, received them with every appearance of good-will. But this was merely a mask. A few hours later the treacherous savages suddenly fell upon and slew the messengers of peace.[1] It was never learned whether the deed was the mere wanton outrage of some bloodthirsty young braves, or the result of orders given by one of the Indian councils. At any rate, the Indians never punished the treachery; and when the chiefs wrote to Washington they mentioned with cool indifference that "you sent us at different times different speeches, the bearers whereof our foolish young men killed on their way"[2]; not even expressing regret for the occurrence.

The truculent violence and bad faith of the savages merited severe chastisement; but the United States Government was long-suffering and forbearing to a degree. There was no attempt to avenge the murder of the flag-of-truce men. On the contrary, renewed efforts were made to secure a peace by treaty. In the fall of 1792, Rufus Putnam, on behalf of the United States, succeeded in concluding a treaty with the Wabash and Illinois

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 238, 239, etc.; also Marshall.

[2] *Canadian Archives*, Indian Affairs, M. 2, p. 224. The Michigan and Wisconsin historical societies have performed a great service by publishing so many of these papers.

tribes,[1] which at least served to keep many of their young braves out of actual hostilities. In the following spring, three Commissioners—Benjamin Lincoln, Beverly Randolph, and Timothy Pickering, all men of note—were sent to persuade the Miami tribes and their allies to agree to a peace. In his letter of instructions the Secretary of War impressed upon them the desire of the people of the United States for peace in terms that were almost humiliating, and even directed them, if necessary, to cede some of the lands already granted by the Indians at previous treaties.

In May, 1793, the Commissioners went to Niagara, where they held meetings with various Iroquois chiefs and exchanged friendly letters with the British officers of the posts, who assured them that they would help in the effort to conclude a peace. Captain Brant, the Iroquois chief, acted as spokesman for a deputation of the hostile Indians from the Miami, where a great council was being held, at which not only the northwestern tribes but the Five Nations were in attendance. The Commissioners then sailed to the Detroit River, having first sent home a strong remonstrance against the activity displayed by the new commander on the Ohio, Wayne, whose vigorous measures, they said, had angered the Indians and were considered by the British "unfair and

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 338.

unwarrantable." This was a preposterous complaint; throughout our history, whether in dealing with Indians or with other foes, our Peace Commissioners have invariably shown to disadvantage when compared with the military commandants, for whom they always betray such jealousy. Wayne's conduct was eminently proper; and it is difficult to understand the mental attitude of the Commissioners who criticised it because the British considered it "unwarrantable." However, a few weeks later they learned to take a more just view of Wayne, and to thank him for the care with which he had kept the peace while they were vainly trying to treat; for at the Detroit they found they could do nothing. Brant and the Iroquois urged the northwestern tribes not to yield any point, and promised them help, telling the British agent, McKee, evidently to his satisfaction, "we came here not only to assist with our advice, but other ways, . . . we came here with arms in our hands"; and they insisted that the country belonged to the confederated tribes in common, and so could not be surrendered save by all.[1] Brant was the inveterate foe of the Americans, and the pensioner of the British; and his advice to the tribes was sound, and was adopted by them—though he misled them by his never-fulfilled promise of support. They refused to con-

[1] Draper MSS., Brant to McKee, August 4, 1793.

sider any proposition which did not acknowledge the Ohio as the boundary between them and the United States; and so, towards the end of August, the commissioners returned to report their failure.[1] The final solution of the problem was thus left to the sword of Wayne.

The attitude of the British gradually changed from passive to active hostility. In 1792 and 1793 they still wished the Indians to make peace with the Americans, provided always there were no such concessions made to the latter as would endanger the British control of the fur trade. But by the beginning of 1794 the relations between Great Britain and the United States had become so strained that open war was threatened; for the advisers of the King, relying on the weakness of the young Federal Republic, had begun to adopt that tone of brutal insolence which reflected well the general attitude of the British people towards the Americans, and which finally brought on the second war between the two nations.

The British officials in Canada were quick to reflect the tone of the home government, and, as always in such cases, the more zealous and belligerent went a little farther than they were authorized. On February 10th, Lord Dorchester, Governor of Canada, in an address of welcome to some of the chiefs from the tribes of the North and

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 340–360.

West said, speaking of the boundary: "Children, since my return I find no appearance of a line remains; and from the manner in which the people of the United States push on and act and talk . . . I shall not be surprised if we are at war with them in the course of the present year; and if so a line must then be drawn by the warriors . . . we have acted in the most peaceable manner and borne the language and conduct of the people of the United States with patience; but I believe our patience is almost exhausted." [1] Of course such a speech, delivered to such an audience, was more than a mere incitement to war; it was a direct appeal to arms. Nor did the encouragement given the Indians end with words; for in April, Simcoe, the Lieutenant-Governor, himself built a fort at the Miami Rapids, in the very heart of the hostile tribes, and garrisoned it with British regulars, in fantry, and artillery; which, wrote one of the British officials to another, had "put all the Indians here in great spirits" [2] to resist the Americans.

[1] Rives's *Life and Times of James Madison*, iii., 418. A verified copy of the speech from the archives of the London foreign office. The authenticity of the speech was admitted at the time by the British Minister; yet, extraordinary to say, not only British but American historians have spoken of it as spurious.

[2] *Canadian Archives*, Thomas Duggan to Joseph Chew, Detroit, April 16, 1794.

The same official further reported that the Spaniards also were exciting the Indians to war, and were in communication with Simcoe, their messengers coming to him at his post on the Miami. At this time the Spanish Governor, Carondelet, was alarmed over Clark's threatened invasion of Louisiana on behalf of the French Republic. He wrote to Simcoe asking for English help in the event of such invasion. Simcoe, in return, wrote, expressing his good-will, and enclosing a copy of Dorchester's speech to the northern Indians; which, Carondelet reported to the Court of Spain, showed that the English were following the same system adopted by the Spaniards in reference to the Indians, whom they were employing with great success against the Americans.[1] Moreover, the Spaniards, besides communicating with the British, sent messages to the Indians at the Miami, urging them to attack the Americans, and promising help[2]; a promise which they never fulfilled, save that in a covert way they furnished the savages with arms and munitions of war.

The Canadians themselves were excited and alarmed by Dorchester's speech,[3] copies of which

[1] Draper MSS., Spanish Documents, letter of Carondelet, July 9, 1794.

[2] *Canadian Archives*, letter of McKee, May 7, 1794.

[3] *Ibid.*, Joseph Chew to Thomas Aston Coffin, Montreal, February 27, 1794.

were distributed broadcast, for the general feeling was that it meant that war was about to be declared between Great Britain and the United States. The Indians took the same view, as to what the speech meant; but to them it gave unmixed pleasure and encouragement. The British officials circulated it everywhere among the tribes, reading it aloud to the gathered chiefs and fighting men. "His Excellency Governor Simcoe has just now left my house on his way to Detroit with Lord Dorchester's speech to the Seven Nations," wrote Brant the Iroquois chief to the Secretary of Indian Affairs for Canada, "and I have every reason to believe when it is delivered that matters will take an immediate change to the Westward, as it will undoubtedly give those Nations high spirits and enable them by a perfect union to check General Wayne." [1] In April, Lieutenant-Colonel John Butler, of the British army, addressed a great council of chiefs near Buffalo, beginning: "I have now a speech to deliver to you from your father Lord Dorchester, which is of the utmost consequence, therefore desire you will pay strict attention to it." [2] He then delivered the speech, to the delight of the Indians, and continued: "You have heard the great talk of our going to war with the United States, and by the speech of your Father

[1] *Canadian Archives*, Brant to Chew, April 21, 1794.
[2] *Ibid.*, Butler to Chew, April 27, 1794.

just now delivered to you, you cannot help seeing there is a great prospect of it, I have therefore to recommend you to be all unanimous as one man, and to call in all your people that may be scattered about the Territories of the United States." McKee, the British Indian agent among the northwestern tribes who were at war with the Americans, reported with joy the rapid growth of warlike spirit among the savages in consequence of Dorchester's speech, and of the building of the British fort on the Miami. He wrote: "The face of the Indian affairs in this country, I have the greatest satisfaction in informing you, seems considerably altered for the better. His Excellency Lord Dorchester's speech and the arrival here of speeches from the Spaniards induce me to believe that a very extensive union of the Indian Nations will be the immediate consequence. The Lieutenant Governor has ordered a strong detachment of the 24th Regt. to take post a mile & a half below this place, this step has given great spirits to the Indians and impressed them with a hope of our ultimately acting with them and affording a security for their families, should the enemy penetrate to their villages." [1]

Nor did the British confine their encouragement to words. The Canadian authorities forwarded to the Miami tribes, through the agent McKee,

[1] *Canadian Archives*, McKee to Chew, May 8, 1794.

quantities of guns, rifles, and gunlocks, besides vermilion paint and tobacco.[1] McKee was careful to get from the home authorities the best firearms he could, explaining that his red *protégés* preferred the long to the short rifles, and considered the common trade guns makeshifts, to be used only until they could get better ones.

The Indians made good use of the weapons thus furnished them by the "neutral" British. A party of Delawares and Shawnees, after a successful skirmish with the Americans, brought to McKee six of the scalps they had taken; and part of the speech of presentation at the solemn council where they were received by McKee, ran: "We had two actions with [some of Wayne's troops who were guarding convoys] in which a great many of our enemies were killed. Part of their flesh we have brought here with us to convince our friend of the truth of their being now in great force on their march against us; therefore, Father [addressing McKee], we desire you to be strong and bid your children make haste to our assistance as was promised by them." The speaker, a Delaware chief, afterwards handed the six scalps to a Huron chief, that he might distribute them among the tribes. McKee sent to the home authorities a full account of this council, where he had assisted at the reception and distribution of the scalps the

[1] *Canadian Archives*, Chew to Coffin, June 23, 1794.

savages had taken from the soldiers of a nation with which the British still pretended to be at peace; and a few days later he reported that the lake Indians were at last gathering, and that when the fighting men of the various tribes joined forces, as he had reason to believe they shortly would, the British posts would be tolerably secure from any attacks by Wayne.[1]

The Indians served the British, not only as a barrier against the Americans, but as a police for their own soldiers, to prevent their deserting. An Englishman who visited the lake posts at this time recorded with a good deal of horror the fate that befell one of a party of deserters from the British garrison at Detroit. The commander, on discovering that they had gone, ordered the Indians to bring them back, dead or alive. When overtaken one resisted, and was killed and scalped. The Indians brought in his scalp and hung it outside the fort, where it was suffered to remain, that the ominous sight might strike horror to other discontented soldiers.[2]

The publication of Lord Dorchester's speech caused angry excitement in the United States. Many thought it spurious; but Washington, then

[1] *Canadian Archives*, McKee's letters, May 25 and May 30, 1794.

[2] Draper MSS. From Parliament Library in Canada, MS. "Canadian Letters," descriptive of a tour in Canada in 1792–93.

President, with his usual clear-sightedness, at once recognized that it was genuine, and accepted it as proof of Great Britain's hostile feeling towards his country. Through the Secretary of State he wrote to the British Minister, calling him to sharp account, not only for Dorchester's speech but for the act of building a fort on the Miami, and for the double-dealing of his government, which protested friendship, with smooth duplicity, while their agents urged the savages to war. "At the very moment when the British Ministry were forwarding assurances of good will, does Lord Dorchester foster and encourage in the Indians hostile dispositions towards the United States," ran the letter, "but this speech only forebodes hostility; the intelligence which has been received this morning is, if true, hostility itself . . . governor Simcoe has gone to the foot of the Rapids of the Miami, followed by three companies of a British regiment, in order to build a fort there." The British Minister, Hammond, in his answer, said he was "willing to admit the authenticity of the speech," and even the building of the fort; but sought to excuse both by recrimination, asserting that the Americans had themselves in various ways shown hostility to Great Britain.[1]

[1] Wait's *State Papers and Publick Documents*, i., 449, 451. Letters of Randolph, May 20, 1794, and Hammond, May 22, 1794.

In spite of this explicit admission, however, the British statesmen generally, both in the House of Lords and the House of Commons, disavowed the speech, though in guarded terms [1]; and many Americans were actually convinced by their denials.

Throughout this period, whatever the negotiators might say or do, the ravages of the Indian war-parties never ceased. In the spring following St. Clair's defeat, the frontiers of Pennsylvania suffered as severely as those of Virginia from bands of savages who were seeking for scalps, prisoners, and horses. Boats were waylaid and attacked as they descended the Ohio; and the remote settlements were mercilessly scourged. The spies or scouts, the trained Indian fighters, were out all the while, watching for the war-bands; and when they discovered one, a strong party of rangers or militia was immediately gathered to assail it, if it could be overtaken. Every variety of good and bad fortune attended these expeditions. Thus, in August, 1792, the spies discovered an Indian party in the lower settlements of Kentucky. Thirty militia gathered, followed the trail, and overtook the marauders at Rolling Fork, killing four, while the others scattered; of the whites, one was killed and two wounded. About the same time Kenton

[1] *American State Papers*, Foreign Relations, i., Randolph to Jay, August 18, 1794.

found a strong Indian camp, which he attacked at dawn, killing three warriors; but when they turned out in force, and one of his own scouts was killed, he promptly drew back out of danger. Neither the Indians nor the wild white Indian fighters made any point of honor about retreating. They wished to do as much damage as possible to their foes, and if the fight seemed doubtful they at once withdrew to await a more favorable opportunity. As for the individual adventures, their name was legion. All the old annalists, all the old frontiersmen who in after-life recorded their memories of the Indian wars, tell, with interminable repetition, stories, grewsome in their bloodthirstiness, and as monotonous in theme as they are varied in detail: — how such-and-such a settler was captured by two Indians, and, watching his chance, fell on his captors when they sat down to dinner and slew them "with a squaw-axe"; how another man was treacherously attacked by two Indians who had pretended to be peaceful traders, and how, though wounded, he killed them both; how two or three cabins were surprised by the savages and all the inhabitants slain; or how a flotilla of flat-boats was taken and destroyed while moored to the bank of the Ohio; and so on, without end.[1]

[1] Draper MSS., Major McCully to Captain Biddle, Pittsburg, May 5, 1792; B. Netherland to Evan Shelby, July 5,

The United States authorities vainly sought peace, while the British instigated the tribes to war, and the savages themselves never thought of ceasing their hostilities. The frontiersmen also wished war, and regarded the British and Indians with an equal hatred. They knew that the presence of the British in the lake posts meant Indian war; they knew that the Indians would war on them, whether they behaved well or ill, until the tribes suffered some signal overthrow; and they coveted the Indian lands with a desire as simple as it was brutal. Nor were land hunger and revenge the only motives that stirred them to aggression; meaner feelings were mixed with the greed for untilled prairie and unfelled forest, and the fierce longing for blood. Throughout our history as a nation, as long as we had a frontier, there was always a class of frontiersmen for whom an Indian war meant the chance to acquire wealth at the expense of the Government, and on the Ohio in 1792 and '93 there were plenty of men who, in the event of a campaign, hoped to make profit out of the goods, horses, and cattle they supplied the soldiers. One of Madison's Kentucky friends wrote him, with rather startling frankness, that the welfare of the new State hinged on the advent of an army to assail the Indians: first, be-

1793, etc. Also Kentucky *Gazette*, September 1, 1792; Charleston *Gazette*, July 22, 1791, etc.

cause of the defence it would give the settlers; and, secondly, because it would be the chief means of introducing into the country a sufficient quantity of money for circulation.[1] Madison himself evidently saw nothing out of the way in this twofold motive of the frontiersmen for wishing the presence of an army. In all the border communities there was a lack of circulating medium, and an earnest desire to obtain more by any expedient.

Like many other frontiersmen, Madison's correspondent indulged almost equally in complaints of the Indian ravages and in denunciations of the regular army, which alone could put an end to them, and of the national party which sustained the army.[2]

Major-General Anthony Wayne, a Pennsylvanian, had been chosen to succeed St. Clair in the command of the army; and on him devolved the task of wresting victory from the formidable forest tribes, fighting as the latter were in the almost impenetrable wilderness of their own country. The tribes were aided by the support covertly, and often openly, yielded them by the British. They had even more effective allies in the suspicion with which the backwoodsmen regarded the regular

[1] State Department MSS., Madison Papers, Hubbard Taylor to Madison, January 3, 1792.

[2] *Ibid.*, Taylor to Madison, April 16, 1792; May 8 and 17, 1792; May 23, 1793, etc.

army, and the supine indifference of the people at large, which forced the administration to try every means to obtain peace before adopting the only manly and honorable course, a vigorous war.

Of all men, Wayne was the best fitted for the work. In the Revolutionary War no other general, American, British, or French, won such a reputation for hard fighting, and for daring energy and dogged courage. He felt very keenly that delight in the actual shock of battle which the most famous fighting generals have possessed. He gloried in the excitement and danger, and shone at his best when the stress was sorest; and because of his magnificent courage his soldiers had affectionately christened him "Mad Anthony." But his head was as cool as his heart was stout. He was taught in a rough school; for the early campaigns in which he took part were waged against the gallant generals and splendid soldiery of the British King. By experience he had grown to add caution to his dauntless energy. Once, after the battle of Brandywine, when he had pushed close to the enemy, with his usual fearless self-confidence, he was surprised in a night attack by the equally daring British General Grey, and his brigade was severely punished with the bayonet. It was a lesson he never forgot; it did not in any way abate his self-reliance or his fiery ardor, but it taught him the necessity of forethought, of

thorough preparation, and of ceaseless watchfulness. A few days later he led the assault at Germantown, driving the Hessians before him with the bayonet. This was always his favorite weapon; he had the utmost faith in coming to close quarters, and he trained his soldiers to trust the steel. At Monmouth he turned the fortunes of the day by his stubborn and successful resistance to the repeated bayonet charges of the Guards and Grenadiers. His greatest stroke was the storming of Stony Point, where in person he led the midnight rush of his troops over the walls of the British fort. He fought with his usual hardihood against Cornwallis; and at the close of the Revolutionary War he made a successful campaign against the Creeks in Georgia. During this campaign the Creeks one night tried to surprise his camp, and attacked with resolute ferocity, putting to flight some of the troops; but Wayne rallied them and, sword in hand, he led them against the savages, who were overthrown and driven from the field. In one of the charges he cut down an Indian chief; and the dying man, as he fell, killed Wayne's horse with a pistol shot.

As soon as Wayne reached the Ohio, in June, 1792, he set about reorganizing the army. He had as a nucleus the remnant of St. Clair's beaten forces; and to this were speedily added hundreds of recruits enlisted under new legislation by Con-

gress, and shipped to him as fast as the recruiting officers could send them. The men were of precisely the same general character as those who had failed so dismally under St. Clair, and it was even more difficult to turn them into good soldiers, for the repeated disasters, crowned by the final crushing horror, had unnerved them and made them feel that their task was hopeless, and that they were foredoomed to defeat.[1] The mortality among the officers had been great, and the new officers, though full of zeal, needed careful training. Among the men desertions were very common; and on the occasion of a sudden alarm Wayne found that many of his sentries left their posts and fled.[2] Only rigorous and long-continued discipline and exercise under a commander both stern and capable, could turn such men into soldiers fit for the work Wayne had before him. He saw this at once, and realized that a premature movement meant nothing but another defeat; and he began by careful and patient labor to turn his horde of raw recruits into a compact and efficient army, which he might use with his customary energy and decision. When he took command of the army—or "Legion," as he preferred to call it

[1] Bradley MSS. "Journal and letters" of Captain Daniel Bradley; see entry of May 7, 1793, etc.

[2] *Major-General Anthony Wayne*, by Charles J. Stillé, p. 323.

—the one stipulation he made was that the campaign should not begin until his ranks were full and his men thoroughly disciplined.

Towards the end of the summer of '92 he established his camp on the Ohio, about twenty-seven miles below Pittsburg. He drilled both officers and men with unwearied patience, and gradually the officers became able to do the drilling themselves, while the men acquired the soldierly self-confidence of veterans. As the new recruits came in they found themselves with an army which was rapidly learning how to manœuvre with precision, to obey orders unhesitatingly, and to look forward eagerly to a battle with the foe. Throughout the winter Wayne kept at work, and by the spring he had under him twenty-five hundred regular soldiers who were already worthy to be trusted in a campaign. He never relaxed his efforts to improve them; though a man of weaker stuff might well have been discouraged by the timid and hesitating policy of the National Government. The Secretary of War, in writing to him, laid stress chiefly on the fact that the American people desired at every hazard to avert an Indian war, and that on no account should offensive operations be undertaken against the tribes. Such orders tied Wayne's hands, for offensive operations offered the only means of ending the war; but he patiently bided his time, and made ready his army against

the day when his superiors should allow him to use the weapon he had tempered.

In May, '93, he brought his army down the Ohio to Fort Washington, and near it established a camp which he christened Hobson's Choice. Here he was forced to wait the results of the fruitless negotiations carried on by the United States Peace Commissioners, and it was not until about the 1st of October that he was given permission to begin the campaign. Even when he was allowed to move his army forward he was fettered by injunctions not to run any risks—and of course a really good fighting general ought to be prepared to run risks. The Secretary of War wrote him that above all things he was to remember to hazard nothing, for a defeat would be fraught with ruinous consequences to the country. Wayne knew very well that if such was the temper of the country and the Government, it behooved him to be cautious, and he answered that, though he would at once advance towards the Indian towns, to threaten the tribes, he would not run the least unnecessary risk. Accordingly, he shifted his army to a place some eighty miles north of Cincinnati, where he encamped for the winter, building a place of strength which he named Greeneville, in honor of his old comrade-in-arms, General Greene. He sent forward a strong detachment of troops to the site of St. Clair's defeat, where they built a post which

was named Fort Recovery. The discipline of the army steadily improved, though now and then a soldier deserted, usually fleeing to Kentucky, but in one or two cases striking through the woods to Detroit. The bands of auxiliary militia that served now and then for short periods with the regulars, were of course much less well trained and less dependable.

The Indians were always lurking about the forts, and threatening the convoys of provisions and munitions as they marched slowly from one to the other. Any party that left a fort was in imminent danger. On one occasion the commander of Fort Jefferson and his orderly were killed and scalped but three hundred yards from the fort. A previous commander of this fort, while hunting in this neighborhood had been attacked in similar fashion, and, though he escaped, his son and a soldier were slain. On another occasion a dozen men, near the same fort, were surprised while haying; four were killed and the other eight captured four of whom were burned at the stake.[1] Before Wayne moved down the Ohio a band of Kentucky mounted riflemen, under Major John Adair, were attacked under the walls of one of the log forts—Fort St. Clair—as they were convoying a large number of pack-horses. The riflemen were in

[1] Bradley MSS., "Journal," entries of February 11, February 24, June 24, July 12, 1792.

camp at the time, the Indians making the assault at dawn. Most of the horses were driven off or killed, and the men fled to the fort, which, Adair dryly remarked, proved "a place of safety for the bashful"; but he rallied fifty, who drove off the Indians, killing two and wounding others. Of his own men, six were killed and five wounded.[1]

Wayne's own detachments occasionally fared as badly. In the fall of 1793, just after he had advanced to Greeneville, a party of ninety regulars, who were escorting twenty heavily laden wagons, were surprised and scattered, a few miles from the scene of Adair's misadventure.[2] The lieutenant and ensign who were in command and five or six of their men were slain, fighting bravely; half a dozen were captured; the rest were panic-struck and fled without resistance. The Indians took off about seventy horses, leaving the wagons standing in the middle of the road, with their contents uninjured; and a rescue party brought them safely to Wayne. The victors were a party of Wyandots and Ottawas under the chief Little Otter. On October 24th, the British agent at the Miami towns met in solemn council with these Indians and with another successful war-party. The Indians had with them ten scalps and two prisoners. Seven of

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 335. Adair to Wilkinson, November 6, 1792.

[2] Bradley MSS., "Journal," entry of October 17, 1793.

the scalps they sent off, by an Indian runner, a special ally friend of the British agent, to be distributed among the different lake Indians, to rouse them to war. One of their prisoners, an Irishman, they refused to surrender; but the other they gave to the agent. He proved to be a German, a mercenary who had originally been in Burgoyne's army.[1] Later, one of the remaining captives made his escape, killing his two Indian owners, a man and a woman, both of whom had been leaders of war-parties.

In the spring of 1794, as soon as the ground was dry, Wayne prepared to advance towards the hostile towns and force a decisive battle. He was delayed for a long time by lack of provisions, the soldiers being on such short rations that they could not move. The mounted riflemen of Kentucky, who had been sent home at the beginning of winter, again joined him. Among the regulars in the rifle company was a young Kentuckian, Captain William Clark, brother of George Rogers Clark, and afterwards one of the two famous explorers who first crossed the continent to the Pacific. In his letters home Clark dwelt much on the laborious nature of his duties, and mentioned

[1] *Canadian Archives*, Duggan to Chew, February 3, 1794, enclosing his journal for the fall of 1793. *American State Papers*, iv., 361, Wayne to Knox, October 23, 1793. The Americans lost thirteen men; the Indian reports, of course, exaggerated this.

that he was "like to have starved," and had to depend on his rifle for subsistence.[1] In May, he was sent from Fort Washington with twenty dragoons and sixty infantry to escort seven hundred pack-horses to Greeneville. When eighteen miles from Fort Washington, Indians attacked his van, driving off a few pack-horses; but Clark brought up his men from the rear and after a smart skirmish put the savages to flight. They left behind one of their number dead, two wounded, and seven rifles; Clark lost two men killed and two wounded.[2]

On the last day of June, a determined assault was made by the Indians on Fort Recovery, which was garrisoned by about two hundred men. Thanks to the efforts of the British agents, and of the runners from the allied tribes of the lower lakes, the Chippewas and all the tribes of the upper lakes had taken the tomahawk, and in June they gathered at the Miami. Over two thousand warriors, all told,[3] assembled; a larger body than had ever before marched against the

[1] Draper MSS., William Clark to Jonathan Clark, May 25, 1794.

[2] *Ibid.* Also *Canadian Archives*, Duggan to Chew, May 30, 1794. As an instance of the utter untrustworthiness of these Indian or British accounts of the American losses, it may be mentioned that Duggan says the Indians brought off forty scalps, and killed an unknown number of Americans in addition; whereas in reality only two were slain. Even Duggan admits that the Indians were beaten off.

[3] *Canadian Archives*, McKee to Chew, July 7, 1794.

Americans.[1] They were eager for war, and wished to make a stroke of note against their foes; and they resolved to try to carry Fort Recovery, built on the scene of their victory over St. Clair. They streamed down through the woods in long columns, and silently neared the fort. With them went a number of English and French rangers, most of whom were painted and dressed like the Indians.

When they reached the fort they found camped close to the walls a party of fifty dragoons and ninety riflemen. These dragoons and riflemen had escorted a brigade of pack-horses from Greeneville the day before, and having left the supplies in the fort were about to return with the unladen pack-horses. But soon after daybreak the Indians rushed their camp. Against such overwhelming numbers no effective resistance could be made. After a few moments' fight the men broke and ran to the fort. The officers, as usual, showed no fear, and were the last to retreat, half of them being killed or wounded: one of the honorably noteworthy features of all these Indian fights was the

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 488, Wayne to the Secretary of War, 1794.

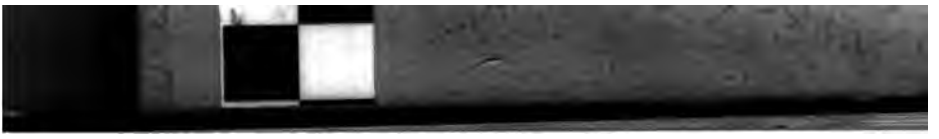
He says they probably numbered from 1500 to 2000 men, which was apparently about the truth. Throughout this campaign the estimates of the Americans as to the Indian forces and losses were usually close to the facts, and were often under- rather than over-statements.

large relative loss among the officers. Most of the dragoons and riflemen reached the fort, including nineteen who were wounded; nineteen officers and privates were killed, and two of the pack-horsemen were killed and three captured. Two hundred pack-horses were captured. The Indians, flushed with success and rendered over-confident by their immense superiority in numbers, made a rush at the fort, hoping to carry it by storm. They were beaten back at once with severe loss; for in such work they were no match for their foes. They then surrounded the fort, kept up a harmless fire all day, and renewed it the following morning. In the night they bore off their dead, finding them with the help of torches; eight or ten of those nearest the fort they could not get. They then drew off and marched back to the Miami towns. At least twenty-five [1] of them had been killed, and

[1] *Canadian Archives*, G. Lamothe to Joseph Chew, Michilimackinac, July 19, 1794. McKee says, "17 men killed"; evidently he either wilfully understated the truth, or else referred only to the particular tribes with which he was associated. Lamothe says, "they have lost twenty-five people amongst different nations," but as he was only speaking of the upper lake Indians, it may be that the total Indian loss was 25 plus 17, or 42. McKee always understates the British force and loss, and greatly overstates the loss and force of the Americans. In this letter he says that the Americans had 50 men killed, instead of 22; and that 60 "drivers" (pack-horsemen) were taken and killed; whereas in reality 3 were taken and 2 killed.

a great number wounded; whereas they had only succeeded in killing one and wounding eleven of the garrison. They were much disheartened at the check, and the upper lake Indians began to go home. The savages were as fickle as they were ferocious; and though terrible antagonists when fighting on their own ground and in their own manner, they lacked the stability necessary for undertaking a formidable offensive movement in mass. This army of two thousand warriors, the largest they had ever assembled, was repulsed with loss in an attack on a wooden fort with a garrison not one sixth their strength, and then dissolved without accomplishing anything at all.

Three weeks after the successful defence of Fort Recovery, Wayne was joined by a large force of mounted volunteers from Kentucky, under General Scott; and, on July 27th, he set out towards the Miami towns. The Indians who watched his march brought word to the British that his army went twice as far in a day as St. Clair's, that he kept his scouts well out and his troops always in open order and ready for battle; that he exercised the greatest precaution to avoid an ambush or surprise, and that every night the camps of the different regiments were surrounded by breastworks of fallen trees, so as to render a sudden assault hopeless. Wayne was determined to avoid the fates of Braddock and St. Clair. His "legion"



of regular troops was over two thousand strong. His discipline was very severe, yet he kept the loyal affection of his men. He had made the officers devote much of their time to training the infantry in marksmanship and the use of the bayonet, and the cavalry in the use of the sabre. He pressed upon the cavalry and infantry alike that their safety lay in charging home with the utmost resolution. By steady drill he had turned his force, which was originally not of a promising character, into as fine an army, for its size, as a general could wish to command.

The perfection of fighting capacity to which he had brought his forces caused much talk among the frontiersmen themselves. One of the contingent of Tennessee militia wrote home in the highest praise of the horsemanship and swordsmanship of the cavalry, who galloped their horses at speed over any ground, and leaped them over formidable obstacles, and of the bayonet practice, and especially of the marksmanship, of the infantry. He remarked that hunters were apt to undervalue the soldiers as marksmen, but that Wayne's riflemen were as good shots as any hunters he had ever seen at any of the many matches he had attended in the backwoods.[1]

Wayne showed his capacity as a commander by the use he made of his spies or scouts. A few of

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, August 27, 1793.

these were Chickasaw or Choctaw Indians; the rest, twenty or thirty in number, were drawn from the ranks of the wild white Indian fighters, the men who plied their trade of warfare and the chase right on the hunting-grounds of the hostile tribes. They were far more dangerous to the Indians, and far more useful to the army, than the like number of regular soldiers or ordinary rangers.

It was on these fierce backwoods riflemen that Wayne chiefly relied for news of the Indians, and they served him well. In small parties, or singly, they threaded the forest scores of miles in advance or to one side of the marching army, and kept close watch on the Indians' movements. As skilful and hardy as the red warriors, much better marksmen, and even more daring, they took many scalps, harrying the hunting-parties, and hanging on the outskirts of the big wigwam villages. They captured and brought in Indian after Indian; from whom Wayne got valuable information. The use of scouts, and the consequent knowledge gained by the examination of Indian prisoners, emphasized the difference between St. Clair and Wayne. Wayne's reports are accompanied by many examinations of Indian captives.[1]

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 94, 489. Examination of two Pottawatomies captured on the 5th of June; of two Shawnees captured on the 22d of June; of a Shawnee captured on August 11th, etc.

Among these wilderness warriors who served under Wayne were some who became known far and wide along the border for their feats of reckless personal prowess and their strange adventures. They were of course all men of remarkable bodily strength and agility, with almost unlimited power of endurance, and the keenest eyesight; and they were masters in the use of their weapons. Several had been captured by the Indians when children, and had lived for years with them before rejoining the whites; so that they knew well the speech and customs of the different tribes.

One of these men was the captain of the spies, William Wells. When a boy of twelve he had been captured by the Miamis, and had grown to manhood among them, living like any other young warrior; his Indian name was Black Snake, and he married a sister of the great war chief, Little Turtle. He fought with the rest of the Miamis, and by the side of Little Turtle, in the victories the northwestern Indians gained over Harmar and St. Clair, and during the last battle he killed several soldiers with his own hand. Afterwards, by some wayward freak of mind, he became harassed by the thought that perhaps he had slain some of his own kinsmen; dim memories of his childhood came back to him; and he resolved to leave his Indian wife and half-breed children and rejoin the people of his own color. Tradition relates that on the eve

of his departure he made his purpose known to Little Turtle, and added: "We have long been friends; we are friends yet, until the sun stands so high [indicating the place] in the heavens; from that time we are enemies and may kill one another." Be this as it may, he came to Wayne, was taken into high favor, and made chief of scouts, and served loyally and with signal success until the end of the campaign. After the campaign he was joined by his Indian wife and his children; the latter grew up and married well in the community, so that their blood now flows in the veins of many of the descendants of the old pioneers. Wells himself was slain by the Indians long afterwards, in 1812, at the Chicago massacre.

One of Wells's fellow-spies was William Miller. Miller, like Wells, had been captured by the Indians when a boy, together with his brother Christopher. When he grew to manhood he longed to rejoin his own people, and finally did so, but he could not persuade his brother to come with him, for Christopher had become an Indian at heart. In June, 1794, Wells, Miller, and a third spy, Robert McClellan, were sent out by Wayne with special instructions to bring in a live Indian. McClellan, who a number of years afterwards became a famous plainsman and Rocky Mountain man, was remarkably swift of foot. Near the

Glaize River they found three Indians roasting venison by a fire, on a high open piece of ground, clear of brushwood. By taking advantage of the cover yielded by a fallen tree-top the three scouts crawled within seventy yards of the camp-fire; and Wells and Miller agreed to fire at the two outermost Indians, while McClellan, as soon as they had fired, was to dash in and run down the third. As the rifles cracked, the two doomed warriors fell dead in their tracks; while McClellan bounded forward at full speed, tomahawk in hand. The Indian had no time to pick up his gun; fleeing for his life he reached the bank of the river, where the bluffs were twenty feet high, and sprang over into the stream-bed. He struck a miry place, and while he was floundering McClellan came to the top of the bluff and instantly sprang down full on him, and overpowered him. The others came up and secured the prisoner, whom they found to be a white man; and to Miller's astonishment it proved to be his brother Christopher. The scouts brought their prisoner, and the scalps of the two slain warriors, back to Wayne. At first, Christopher was sulky and refused to join the whites; so at Greeneville he was put in the guard-house. After a few days he grew more cheerful, and said he had changed his mind. Wayne set him at liberty, and he not only served valiantly as a scout through the campaign, but acted as Wayne's interpreter. Early in July

he showed his good faith by assisting McClellan in the capture of a Pottawatomie chief.

On one of Wells's scouts he and his companions came across a family of Indians in a canoe by the river bank. The white wood-rangers were as ruthless as their red foes, sparing neither sex nor age; and the scouts were cocking their rifles when Wells recognized the Indians as being the family into which he had been adopted, and by which he had been treated as a son and brother. Springing forward he swore immediate death to the first man who fired; and then told his companions who the Indians were. The scouts at once dropped their weapons, shook hands with the Miamis, and sent them off unharmed.

Wells's last scouting-trip was made just before the final battle of the campaign. As it was the eve of the decisive struggle, Wayne was anxious to get a prisoner. Wells went off with three companions—McClellan, a man named Mahaffy, and a man named May. May, like Wells and Miller, had lived long with the Indians, first as a prisoner, and afterwards as an adopted member of their tribe, but had finally made his escape. The four scouts succeeded in capturing an Indian man and woman, whom they bound securely. Instead of returning at once with their captives, the companions, in sheer dare-devil, ferocious love of adventure, determined, as it was already nightfall, to leave the

two bound Indians where they could find them again, and go into one of the Indian camps to do some killing. The camp they selected was but a couple of miles from the British fort. They were dressed and painted like Indians, and spoke the Indian tongues; so, riding boldly forward, they came right among the warriors who stood grouped around the camp-fires. They were at arm's-length before their disguise was discovered. Immediately each of them, choosing his man, fired into an Indian, and then they fled, pursued by a hail of bullets. May's horse slipped and fell in the bed of a stream, and he was captured. The other three, spurring hard and leaning forward in their saddles to avoid the bullets, escaped, though both Wells and McClellan were wounded; and they brought their Indian prisoners into Wayne's camp that night. May was recognized by the Indians as their former prisoner; and next day they tied him up, made a mark on his breast for a target, and shot him to death.[1]

[1] McBride collects or reprints a number of narratives dealing with these border heroes; some of them are by contemporaries who took part in their deeds. Brickell's narrative corroborates these stories; the differences are such as would naturally be explained by the fact that different observers were writing of the same facts from memory after a lapse of several years. In their essentials the narratives are undoubtedly trustworthy. In the Draper collection there are scores of MS. narratives of similar kind, written down from what the pioneers said in their old age; unfortunately, it is

With his advance effectually covered by his scouts, and his army guarded by his own ceaseless vigilance, Wayne marched without opposition to the confluence of the Glaize and the Maumee, where the hostile Indian villages began, and whence they stretched to below the British fort. The savages were taken by surprise and fled without offering opposition, while Wayne halted, on August 8th, and spent a week in building a strong log stockade, with four good blockhouses as bastions; he christened the work Fort Defiance.[1] The Indians had cleared and tilled immense fields, and the troops revelled in the fresh vegetables and ears of roasted corn, and enjoyed the rest[2]; for during the march the labor of cutting a road through the thick forest had been very severe, while the water was bad and the mosquitoes were exceedingly troublesome. At one place a tree fell on Wayne and nearly killed him; but though some-

difficult to sift out the true from the false, unless the stories are corroborated from outside sources; and most of the tales in the Draper MSS. are evidently hopelessly distorted. Wells's daring attack on the Indian camp is alluded to in the Bradley MSS.; the journal, under date of August 12th, recites how four white spies went down almost to Lake Erie, captured two Indians, and then attacked the Indians in their tents, three of the spies being wounded.

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 490, Wayne to Secretary of War, August 14, 1794.

[2] Bradley MSS. Letter of Captain Daniel Bradley to Ebenezer Banks, Grand Glaize, August 28, 1794.

what crippled, he continued as active and vigilant as ever.[1]

From Fort Defiance Wayne sent a final offer of peace to the Indians, summoning them at once to send deputies to meet him. The letter was carried by Christopher Miller, and a Shawnee prisoner; and in it Wayne explained that Miller was a Shawnee by adoption, whom the soldiers had captured "six months since," while the Shawnee warrior had been taken but a couple of days before; and he warned the Indians that he had seven Indian prisoners, who had been well treated, but who would be put to death if Miller was harmed. The Indians did not molest Miller, but sought to obtain delay, and would give no definite answer; whereupon Wayne advanced against them, having laid waste and destroyed all their villages and fields.

His army marched on the 15th, and on the 18th reached Roche du Bout, by the Maumee Rapids, only a few miles from the British fort. Next day was spent in building a rough breastwork to protect the stores and baggage, and in reconnoitring the Indian position.[2]

The Indians—Shawnees, Delawares, Wyandots,

[1] *American Pioneer*, i., 317, "Daily Journal of Wayne's Campaign." By Lieutenant Boyer. Reprinted separately in Cincinnati in 1866.

[2] *American State Papers*, 491, Wayne's Report to Secretary of War, August 28, 1794.

Ottawas, Miamis, Pottawatamies, Chippewas, and Iroquois—were camped close to the British. There were between fifteen hundred and two thousand warriors; and in addition there were seventy rangers from Detroit, French, English, and refugee Americans, under Captain Caldwell, who fought with them in the battle. The British agent McKee was with them; and so was Simon Girty, the "white renegade," and another partisan leader, Elliott. But McKee, Girty, and Elliott did not actually fight in the battle.[1]

On August 20, 1794, Wayne marched to battle against the Indians.[2] They lay about six miles down the river, near the British fort, in a place known as the Fallen Timbers, because there the thick forest had been overturned by a whirlwind,

[1] *Canadian Archives*, McKee to Chew, August 27, 1794. McKee says there were 1300 Indians, and omits all allusion to Caldwell's rangers. He always underestimates the Indian numbers and loss. In the battle one of Caldwell's rangers, Antoine Lasselle, was captured. He gave in detail the numbers of the Indians engaged; they footed up to over 1500. A deserter from the fort, a British drummer of the 24th Regiment, named John Bevin, testified that he had heard both McKee and Elliott report the number of Indians as 2000, in talking to Major Campbell, the commandant of the fort, after the battle. He and Lasselle agree as to Caldwell's rangers. See their depositions, *American State Papers*, iv., 494.

[2] Draper MSS., William Clark to Jonathan Clark, August 28, 1794. McBride, ii., 129; *Life of Paxton*. Many of the regulars and volunteers were left in Fort Defiance and the breastworks on the Maumee as garrisons.

and the dead trees lay piled across one another in rows. All the baggage was left behind in the breastwork, with a sufficient guard. The army numbered about three thousand men; two thousand were regulars, and there were a thousand mounted volunteers from Kentucky under General Scott.

The army marched down the left or north branch of the Maumee. A small force of mounted volunteers—Kentucky militia—were in front. On the right flank the squadron of dragoons, the regular cavalry, marched next to the river. The infantry, armed with musket and bayonet, were formed in two long lines, the second some little distance behind the first; the left of the first line being continued by the companies of regular riflemen and light troops. Scott, with the body of the mounted volunteers, was thrown out on the left with instructions to turn the flank of the Indians, thus effectually preventing them from performing a similar feat at the expense of the Americans. There could be no greater contrast than that between Wayne's carefully trained troops, marching in open order to the attack, and St. Clair's huddled mass of raw soldiers, receiving an assault they were powerless to repel.

The Indians stretched in a line nearly two miles long at right angles to the river, and began the battle confidently enough. They attacked and

drove in the volunteers who were in advance, and the firing then began along the entire front. But their success was momentary. Wayne ordered the first line of infantry to advance with trailed arms, so as to rouse the savages from their cover, then to fire into their backs at close range, and to follow them hard with the bayonet, so as to give them no time to load. The regular cavalry were directed to charge the left flank of the enemy; for Wayne had determined "to put the horse hoof on the moccasin." Both orders were executed with spirit and vigor.

It would have been difficult to find more unfavorable ground for cavalry; nevertheless, the dragoons rode against their foes at a gallop, with broadswords swinging, the horses dodging in and out among the trees and jumping the fallen logs. They received a fire at close quarters which emptied a dozen saddles, both captains being shot down. One, the commander of the squadron, Captain Mis Campbell,[1] was killed; the other, Captain Van Rensselaer, a representative of one of the old Knickerbocker families of New York, who had joined the army from pure love of adventure, was wounded. The command devolved on Lieutenant Covington, who led forward the troopers, with Lieutenant Webb alongside him; and the dragoons burst among the savages at full

[1] A curious name, but so given in all the reports.

speed, and routed them in a moment. Covington cut down two of the Indians with his own hand, and Webb one.

At the same time the first line of the infantry charged with equal impetuosity and success. The Indians delivered one volley and were then roused from their hiding-places with the bayonet; as they fled they were shot down, and if they attempted to halt they were at once assailed and again driven with the bayonet. They could make no stand at all, and the battle was won with ease. So complete was the success that only the first line of regulars was able to take part in the fighting; the second line, and Scott's horse-riflemen, on the left, in spite of their exertions, were unable to reach the battle-field until the Indians were driven from it; "there not being a sufficiency of the enemy for the Legion to play on," wrote Clark. The entire action lasted under forty minutes.[1] Less than a thousand of the Americans were actually engaged. They pursued the beaten and fleeing Indians for two miles, the cavalry halting only when under the walls of the British fort.

Thirty-three of the Americans were killed and one hundred wounded.[2] It was an easy victory.

[1] Bradley MSS., entry in the journal for August 20th.

[2] Wayne's report; of the wounded 11 afterwards died. He gives an itemized statement. Clark, in his letter, makes the dead 34 (including 8 militia instead of 7) and the wounded only 70. Wayne reports the Indian loss as twice as great as

The Indians suffered much more heavily than the Americans. In killed they probably lost two or three times as many; among the dead were white men from Caldwell's company; and one white [illegible] of the [illegible] and [illegible] the [illegible] were [illegible] with [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] of their white auxiliaries. Many [illegible] Indians were killed. The Englishman, Thomas Duggan, writing from Detroit to Joseph Chew, Secretary of the Indian [illegible] says [illegible] that "great numbers" of the Indians were slain. The journal of Wayne's campaign says [illegible] dead were [illegible] on the field, and that there was considerable additional [illegible] loss in the rout [illegible]. The member of Caldwell's company who was captured was a French Canadian; his deposition is given by Wayne. McKee says the Indians lost but [illegible] men, and that [illegible] were engaged, specifying the Wyandots and Ottawas as being those who did the fighting and suffered the loss; and he puts the loss of the Americans, although he admits that they [illegible] [illegible] He was furious at the defeat, and was endeavoring to minimize it in every way; he does not mention the presence of Caldwell's white company; he makes the mistake of putting the American cavalry on the wrong wing, in trying to show that only the Ottawas and Wyandots were engaged; and if his figures of dead have any value at all, they refer only to these two tribes. Above I have repeatedly shown that he invariably underestimated the Indian losses, usually giving the losses suffered by the band he was with as being the entire loss. In this case he speaks of the fighting and loss as being confined to the Ottawas and Wyandots; but Brickell, who was with the Delawares, states that "many of the Delawares were killed and wounded." All the Indians were engaged; and doubtless all the tribes suffered proportionately and much more than the Americans. Captain Daniel Bradley, in his above-quoted letter of August 28th to Ebenezer Banks (Bradley MSS.), says that between 90 and 100 Indians were killed.

ranger was captured. It was the most complete and important victory ever gained over the northwestern Indians during the forty years' warfare to which it put an end; and it was the only considerable pitched battle in which they lost more than their foes. They suffered heavily among their leaders; no less than eight Wyandot chiefs were slain.

From the fort the British had seen, with shame and anger, the rout of their Indian allies. Their commander wrote to Wayne to demand his intentions; Wayne responded that he thought they were made sufficiently evident by his successful battle with the savages. The Englishman wrote in resentment of this curt reply, complaining that Wayne's soldiers had approached within pistol shot of the fort, and threatened to fire upon them if the offence was repeated. Wayne responded by summoning him to abandon the fort; a summons which he of course refused to heed. Wayne then gave orders to destroy everything up to the very walls of the fort, and his commands were carried out to the letter; not only were the Indian villages burned and their crops cut down, but all the houses and buildings of the British agents and traders, including McKee's, were levelled to the ground. The British commander did not dare to interfere or make good his threats; nor, on the other hand, did Wayne dare to storm the fort, which was well built and heavily armed.

After completing his work of destruction, Wayne marched his army back to Port Defiance. Here he was obliged to halt for over a fortnight while he sent back to Port Recovery for provisions. He employed the time in work on the fort, which he strengthened so that it would stand an attack by a regular army. The mounted volunteers were turned to account in a new manner, being employed not only to escort the pack-animals but themselves to transport the flour on their horses. There was much sickness among the soldiers, especially from fever and ague, and but for the corn and vegetables they obtained from the Indian towns which were scattered thickly along the Maumee they would have suffered from hunger. They were especially disturbed because all the whisky was used up.[1]

On September 14th the legion started westward towards the Miami towns at the junction of the St. Mary's and St. Joseph's rivers, the scene of Harmar's disaster. In four days the towns were reached, the Indians being too cowed to offer resistance. Here the army spent six weeks, burned the towns and destroyed the fields and stores of the hostile tribes, and built a fort which was christened Fort Wayne. British deserters came in from time to time; some of the Canadian traders

[1] "Daily Journal of Wayne's Campaign," *American Pioneer*, i., 351.

made overtures to the army and agreed to furnish provisions at a moderate price; and of the savages, only straggling parties were seen. The mounted volunteers grew mutinous, but were kept in order by their commander Scott, a rough, capable backwoods soldier. Their term of service at length expired and they were sent home; and the regulars of the legion, leaving a garrison at Fort Wayne, marched back to Greeneville, and reached it on November 2d, just three months and six days after they started from it on their memorable and successful expedition. Wayne had shown himself the best general ever sent to war with the northwestern Indians; and his victorious campaign was the most noteworthy ever carried on against them, for it brought about the first lasting peace on the border, and put an end to the bloody turmoil of forty years' fighting. It was one of the most striking and weighty feats in the winning of the West.

The army went into winter quarters at Greeneville. There was sickness among the troops, and there were occasional desertions; the discipline was severe, and the work so hard and dangerous that the men generally refused to re-enlist.[1] The officers were uneasy lest there should be need of a further campaign. But their fears were ground-

[1] Draper MSS., William Clark to Jonathan Clark, November 23, 1794.

less. Before winter set in heralds arrived from the hostile tribes to say that they wished peace.

The Indians were utterly downcast over their defeat.[1] The destruction of their crops, homes, and stores of provisions was complete, and they were put to sore shifts to live through the winter. Their few cattle, and many even of their dogs, died; they could not get much food from the British; and as winter wore on they sent envoy after envoy to the Americans, exchanged prisoners, and agreed to make a permanent peace in the spring. They were exasperated with the British, who, they said, had not fulfilled a single promise they had made.[2]

The anger of the Indians against the British was as just as it was general. They had been lured and goaded into war by direct material aid, and by indirect promises of armed assistance; and they were abandoned as soon as the fortune of war went against them. Brant, the Iroquois chief, was sorely angered by the action of the British in deserting the Indians whom they had encouraged by such delusive hopes; and in his letter to the British officials[3] he reminded them of the fact that but for their interference the Indians would have

[1] *Canadian Archives*, William Johnson Chew to Joseph Chew, December 7, 1794.

[2] Brickell's "Narrative."

[3] *Canadian Archives*, Joseph Brant to Joseph Chew, October 22, 1794; William J. Chew to J. Chew, October 24, 1794.

concluded "an equitable and honorable peace in June, 1793"—thus offering conclusive proof that the American Commissioners, in their efforts to make peace with the Indians in that year, had been foiled by the secret machinations of the British agents, as Wayne had always thought. Brant blamed the British agent McKee for ever having interfered in the Indian councils, and misled the tribes to their hurt; and in writing to the Secretary of the Indian Office for Canada he reminded him in plain terms of the treachery with which the British had behaved to the Indians at the close of the Revolutionary War, and expressed the hope that it would not be repeated, saying[1]: "If there is a treaty between Great Britain and the Yankees I hope our Father the King will not forget the Indians as he did in the year '83." When his forebodings came true and the British, in assenting to Jay's treaty, abandoned their Indian allies, Brant again wrote to the Secretary of the Indian Office, in repressed but bitter anger at the conduct of the King's agents in preventing the Indians from making peace with the Americans while they could have made it on advantageous terms, and then in deserting them. He wrote: "This is the second time the poor Indians have been left in the lurch & I cannot avoid lamenting that they were

[1] *Canadian Archives*, Brant to Joseph Chew, February 24 and March 17, 1795.

prevented at a time when they had it in their power to make an Honorable and Advantageous Peace."[1]

McKee, the British Indian agent, was nearly as frank as Brant in expressing his views of the conduct of the British towards their allies; he doubtless felt peculiar bitterness as he had been made the active instrument in carrying out the policy of his chiefs, and had then seen that policy abandoned and even disavowed. In fact, he suffered the usual fate of those who are chosen to do some piece of work which unscrupulous men in power wish to have done, but wish also to avoid the responsibility of doing. He foretold evil results from the policy adopted, a policy under which, as he put it, "the distressed situation of the poor Indians who have long fought for us and bled farely for us [is] no bar to a Peaceable accommodation with America and . . . they [are] left to shift for themselves."[2] That a sentence of this kind could be truthfully written by one British official to another, was a sufficiently biting comment on the conduct of the British Government.

The battle of the Fallen Timbers opened the eyes of the Indians to more facts than one. They saw that they could not stand against the Americans unassisted. Furthermore, they saw that

[1] *Canadian Archives*, Brant to Chew, January 19, 1796.
[2] *Ibid.*, McKee to Chew, March 27, 1795.

though the British would urge them to fight, and would secretly aid them, yet that in the last resort the King's troops would not come to their help by proceeding to actual war. All their leaders recognized that it was time to make peace. The Americans found an active ally in the French Canadian, Antoine Lasselle, whom they had captured in the battle. He worked hard to bring about a peace, inducing the Canadian traders to come over to the American side, and making every effort to get the Indians to agree to terms. Being a thrifty soul, he drove a good trade with the savages at the councils, selling them quantities of liquor.

In November, the Wyandots from Sandusky sent ambassadors to Wayne at Greeneville. Wayne spoke to them with his usual force and frankness. He told them he pitied them for their folly in listening to the British, who were very glad to urge them to fight and to give them ammunition, but who had neither the power nor the inclination to help them when the time of trial came; that hitherto the Indians had felt only the weight of his little finger, but that he would surely destroy all the tribes in the near future if they did not make peace.[1]

The Hurons went away much surprised, and

[1] *Canadian Archives*, George Ironside to McKee, December 13, 1794.

resolved on peace; and the other tribes followed their example. In January, 1795, the Miamis, Chippewas, Sacs, Delawares, Pottawatomies, and Ottawas sent ambassadors to Greeneville and agreed to treat.[1] The Shawnees were bent on continuing the war; but when their allies deserted them they too sent to Greeneville and asked to be included in the peace.[2] On February 11th the Shawnees, Delawares, and Miamis formally entered into a preliminary treaty.

This was followed in the summer of 1795 by the formal treaty of Greeneville, at which Wayne, on behalf of the United States, made a definite peace with all the northwestern tribes. The sachems, war chiefs, and warriors of the different tribes began to gather early in June; and formal proceedings for a treaty were opened on June 17th. But many of the tribes were slow in coming to the treaty ground, others vacillated in their course, and unforeseen delays arose; so that it was not until August 7th that it was possible to come to a unanimous agreement and ratify the treaty. No less than eleven hundred and thirty Indians were present at the treaty grounds, including a full delegation from every hostile tribe. All solemnly

[1] *Canadian Archives*, Antoine Lasselle to Jacques Lasselle, January 31, 1795.

[2] *Ibid.*, letter of Lieutenant-Colonel England, January 30, 1795; also copy of treaty of peace of February 11th.

covenanted to keep the peace; and they agreed to surrender to the whites all of what is now southern Ohio and southeastern Indiana, and various reservations elsewhere, as at Fort Wayne, Fort Defiance, Detroit, and Michilimackinac, the lands around the French towns, and the hundred and fifty thousand acres near the Falls of the Ohio which had been allotted to Clark and his soldiers. The Government, in its turn, acknowledged the Indian title to the remaining territory, and agreed to pay the tribes annuities aggregating nine thousand five hundred dollars. All prisoners on both sides were restored. There were interminable harangues and councils while the treaty was pending, the Indians invariably addressing Wayne as Elder Brother, and Wayne in response styling them Younger Brothers. In one speech a Chippewa chief put into terse form the reasons for making the treaty, and for giving the Americans title to the land, saying: "Elder Brother, you asked who were the true owners of the land now ceded to the United States. In answer I tell you, if any nations should call themselves the owners of it they would be guilty of falsehood; our claim to it is equal; our Elder Brother has conquered it."[1]

Wayne had brought peace by the sword. It was the first time the border had been quiet for over a generation; and for fifteen years the

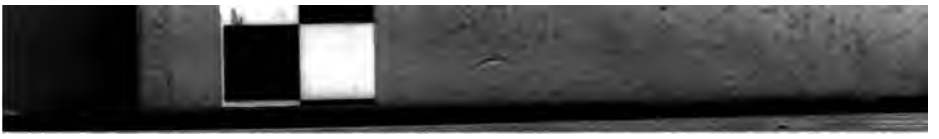
[1] *American State Papers*, iv., 562–583.

derstood to be the policy of their superiors. The ultimate responsibility rested with these superiors, the Crown's high advisers, and the King and Parliament they represented. Their treatment, both of the Indians, whom they professed to protect, and of the Americans, with whom they professed to be friendly, forms one of the darkest pages in the annals of the British in America. Yet they have been much less severely blamed for their behavior in this matter, than for far more excusable offences. American historians, for example, usually condemn them without stint because, in 1814, the army of Ross and Cockburn burned and looted the public buildings of Washington; but by right they should keep all their condemnation for their own country, so far as the taking of Washington is concerned; for the sin of burning a few public buildings is as nothing compared with the cowardly infamy of which the politicians of the stripe of Jefferson and Madison, and the people whom they represented, were guilty in not making ready, by sea and land, to protect their Capital and in not exacting full revenge for its destruction. These facts may with advantage be pondered by those men of the present day who are either so ignorant or of such lukewarm patriotism that they do not wish to see the United States keep prepared for war and show herself willing and able to adopt a vigorous foreign policy whenever there

[illegible] American interests or uphold- [illegible] American flag. America is [illegible] respect the rights of the [illegible] to make stalwart [illegible] against the strong.

[illegible] British on the north- [illegible] insisted on their [illegible] of treachery to [illegible] The success of the British [illegible] mankind in [illegible] the English-speaking races in par- [illegible] savagery and [illegible] the westward march of the settler-folk [illegible] the continent [illegible] But the British cannot be seri- [illegible] because they failed to see this. Their [illegible] and encouraging savages in [illegible] which was necessarily horrible, and still [illegible] of faith. The [illegible] were the inevitable out- [illegible] they had embarked; [illegible] when a civilized govern- [illegible] savages [illegible] and for whose welfare [illegible]

Doubtless the statesmen who shaped the policy of Great Britain never deliberately intended to break faith, and never fully realized the awful nature of the Indian warfare for which they were



in part responsible; they thought very little of the matter at all in the years which saw the beginning of their stupendous struggle with France. But the acts of their obscure agents on the far interior frontier were rendered necessary and inevitable by their policy. To encourage the Indians to hold their own against the Americans, and to keep back the settlers, meant to encourage a war of savagery against the border vanguard of white civilization; and such a war was sure to teem with fearful deeds. Moreover, where the interests of the British Crown were so manifold it was idle to expect that the Crown's advisers would treat as of much weight the welfare of the scarcely known tribes whom their agents had urged to enter a contest which was hopeless, except for British assistance. The British statesmen were engaged in gigantic schemes of warfare and diplomacy; and to them the Indians and the frontiersmen alike were pawns on a great chessboard, to be sacrificed whenever necessary. When the British authorities deemed it likely that there would be war with America, the tribes were incited to take up the hatchet; when there seemed a chance of peace with America the deeds of the tribes were disowned; and peace was finally assured by a cynical abandonment of their red allies. In short, the British, while professing peace with the Americans, treacherously incited the Indians to war against them; and, when it

suited their own interests, they treacherously abandoned their Indian allies to the impending ruin.[1]

[1] The ordinary American histories, often so absurdly unjust to England, are right in their treatment of the British actions on the frontier in 1793–94. The ordinary British historians simply ignore the whole affair. As a type of their class, Mr. Percy Gregg may be instanced. His *History of the United States* is a silly book; he is often intentionally untruthful, but his chief fault is his complete ignorance of the facts about which he is writing. It is, of course, needless to criticise such writers as Mr. Gregg and his fellows. But it is worth while calling attention to Mr. Goldwin Smith's *The United States*, for Mr. Goldwin Smith is a student and must be taken seriously. He says: "That the British government or anybody by its authority was intriguing with the Indians against the Americans is an assertion for which there seems to be no proof." If he will examine the *Canadian Archives*, from which I have quoted, and the authorities which I cite, he will find the proof ready to hand. Prof. A. C. McLaughlin has made a capital study of this question in his pamphlet on *The Western Posts and the British Debts*. What he says cannot well be controverted.

CHAPTER VI

TENNESSEE BECOMES A STATE, 1791–1796

"THE Territory of the United States of America South of the River Ohio" was the official title of the tract of land which had been ceded by North Carolina to the United States, and which a few years later became the State of Tennessee. William Blount, the newly appointed Governor, took charge late in 1790. He made a tour of the various counties, as laid out under authority of the State of North Carolina, rechristening them as counties of the Territory, and summoning before him the persons in each county holding commissions from North Carolina, at the respective court-houses, where he formally notified them of the change. He read to them the act of Congress accepting the cessions of the claims of North Carolina; then he read his own commission from President Washington; and informed them of the provision by North Carolina that Congress should assume and execute the government of the new Territory "in a manner similar to that which they support northwest of the River Ohio." Following this he formally read the ordinance for

the government of the Northwestern Territory. He commented upon and explained this proclamation, saying that under it the President had appointed the Governor, the Judges and the Secretary of the new Territory, and that he himself as Governor, would now appoint the necessary county officers.

The remarkable feature of this address was that he read to the assembled officers in each county, as part of the law apparently binding upon them, Article 6 of the Ordinance of 1787, which provided that there should be neither slavery nor involuntary servitude in the Northwestern Territory.[1] It had been expressly stipulated that this particular provision as regards slavery should not apply to the Southwestern Territory, and of course Blount's omission to mention this fact did not in any way alter the case; but it is a singular thing that he should without comment have read, and his listeners without comment have heard, a recital that slavery was abolished in their Territory. It emphasizes the fact that at this time there was throughout the West no very strong feeling on the subject of slavery, and what feeling there was, was if anything, hostile. The adventurous backwoods farmers who composed the great mass of the popu-

[1] Blount MSS., Journal of Proceedings of William Blount, Esq., Governor in and over the Territory of the United States of America South of the River Ohio, in his executive department, October 23, 1790.

lation in Tennessee, as elsewhere among and west of the Alleghanies, were not a slave-owning people, in the sense that the planters of the seaboard were. They were pre-eminently folk who did their work with their own hands. Master and man chopped and ploughed and reaped and builded side by side, and even the leaders of the community, the militia generals, the legislators, and the judges, often did their share of farm work, and prided themselves upon their capacity to do it well. They had none of that feeling which makes slave-owners look upon manual labor as a badge of servitude. They were often lazy and shiftless, but they never deified laziness and shiftlessness or made them into a cult. The one thing they prized beyond all others was their personal freedom, the right of the individual to do whatsoever he saw fit. Indeed, they often carried this feeling so far as to make them condone gross excesses, rather than insist upon the exercise of even needful authority. They were by no means entirely logical, but they did see and feel that slavery was abhorrent, and that it was utterly inconsistent with the theories of their own social and governmental life. As yet there was no thought of treating slavery as a sacred institution, the righteousness of which must not be questioned. At the Fourth of July celebrations toasts such as "The total abolition of slavery" were not

uncommon.[1] It was this feeling which prevented any manifestation of surprise at Blount's apparent acquiescence in a section of the ordinance for the government of the Territory which prohibited slavery.

Nevertheless, though slaves were not numerous, they were far from uncommon, and the moral conscience of the community was not really roused upon the subject. It was hardly possible that it should be roused, for no civilized people who owned African slaves had as yet abolished slavery, and it was too much to hope that the path toward abolition would be pointed out by poor frontiersmen engaged in a life-and-death struggle with hostile savages. The slave-holders were not interfered with until they gradually grew numerous enough and powerful enough to set the tone of thought, and make it impossible to root out slavery save by outside action.

Blount recommended the appointment of Sevier and Robertson as brigadier-generals of militia of the eastern and western districts of the Territory, and issued a large number of commissions to the justices of the peace, militia officers, sheriffs, and clerks of the county courts in the different counties.[2] In his appointments he shrewdly and

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, July 17, 1795, etc. See also issue January 28, 1792.

[2] Blount MSS., Journal of the Proceedings, etc.

properly identified himself with the natural leaders of the frontiersmen. He made Sevier and Robertson his right-hand men, and strove always to act in harmony with them, while for the minor military and civil officers he chose the persons whom the frontiersmen themselves desired. In consequence he speedily became a man of great influence for good. The Secretary of the Territory reported to the Federal Government that the effect of Blount's character on the frontiersmen was far greater than was the case with any other man, and that he was able to get them to adhere to the principles of order and to support the laws by his influence in a way which it was hopeless to expect from their own respect for governmental authority. Blount was felt by the frontiersmen to be thoroughly in sympathy with them, to understand and appreciate them, and to be heartily anxious for their welfare; and yet at the same time his influence could be counted upon on the side of order, while the majority of the frontier officials in any time of commotion were apt to remain silent and inactive or even to express their sympathy with the disorderly element.[1]

No one but a man of great tact and firmness could have preserved as much order among the frontiersmen as Blount preserved. He was always

[1] *American State Papers*, iv.; Daniel Smith to the Secretary of War, Knoxville, July 19, 1793.

under fire from both sides. The settlers were continually complaining that they were deserted by the Federal authorities, who favored the Indians, and that Blount himself did not take sufficiently active steps to subdue the savages; while on the other hand the National Administration was continually upbraiding him for being too active against the Indians, and for not keeping the frontiersmen sufficiently peaceable. Under many temptations, and in a situation that would have bewildered any one, Blount steadfastly followed his course of, on the one hand, striving his best to protect the people over whom he was placed as governor and to repel the savages, while, on the other hand, he suppressed so far as lay in his power, any outbreak against the authorities, and tried to inculcate a feeling of loyalty and respect for the National Government.[1] He did much in creating a strong feeling of attachment to the Union among the rough backwoodsmen with whom he had thrown in his lot.

Early in 1791, Blount entered into negotiations with the Cherokees, and when the weather grew warm he summoned them to a treaty. They met on the Holston, all of the noted Cherokee chiefs and hundreds of their warriors being present, and concluded the treaty of Holston, by which, in consideration of numerous gifts and of an annuity of

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, February 13, 1793.

a thousand (afterwards increased to fifteen hundred) dollars, the Cherokees at last definitely abandoned their disputed claims to the various tracts of land which the whites claimed under various former treaties. By this treaty with the Cherokees, and by the treaty with the Creeks entered into at New York the previous summer, the Indian title to most of the present State of Tennessee was fairly and legally extinguished. However, the westernmost part was still held by the Chickasaws, and certain tracts in the southeast, by the Cherokees; while the Indian hunting-grounds in the middle of the territory were thrust in between the groups of settlements on the Cumberland and the Holston.

On the ground where the treaty was held Blount proceeded to build a little town, which he made the capital of the Territory, and christened Knoxville, in honor of Washington's Secretary of War. At this town there was started, in 1791, under his own supervision, the first newspaper of Tennessee, known as the Knoxville *Gazette*. It was four or five years younger than the only other newspaper of the then far West, the Kentucky *Gazette*. The paper gives an interesting glimpse of many of the social and political conditions of the day. In political tone it showed Blount's influence very strongly, and was markedly in advance of most of the similar papers of the time, including the

Kentucky *Gazette;* for it took a firm stand in favor of the National Government, and against every form of disorder, of separatism, or of mob law. As with all of the American papers of the day, even in the backwoods, there was much interest taken in European news, and a prominent position was given to long letters, or extracts from seaboard papers, containing accounts of the operations of the English fleets and the French armies, or of the attitude of the European governments. Like most Americans, the editorial writers of the paper originally sympathized strongly with the French Revolution; but the news of the beheading of Marie Antoinette, and the recital of the atrocities committed in Paris, worked a reaction among those who loved order, and the Knoxville *Gazette* ranged itself with them, taking for the time being strong grounds against the French, and even incidentally alluding to the Indians as being more bloodthirsty than any man "not a Jacobin." [1] The people largely shared these sentiments. In 1793, at the Fourth of July celebration at Jonesboro there was a public dinner and ball, as there was also at Knoxville; Federal troops were paraded and toasts were drunk to the President, to the Judges of the Supreme Court, to Blount, to General Wayne, to the friendly Chickasaw Indians, to Sevier, to the ladies of the Southwestern Territory,

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, March 27, 1794.

to the American arms, and, finally, "to the true liberties of France and a speedy and just punishment of the murderers of Louis XVI." The word "Jacobin" was used as a term of reproach for some time.

The paper was at first decidedly Federalist in sentiment. No sympathy was expressed with Genet or with the efforts undertaken by the western allies of the French Minister to organize a force for the conquest of Louisiana; and the Tennessee settlers generally took the side of law and order in the earlier disturbances in which the Federal Government was concerned. At the Fourth of July celebration in Knoxville in 1795, one of the toasts was: "The four western counties of Pennsylvania—may they repent their folly and sin no more"; the Tennesseeans sympathizing as little with the Pennsylvania whisky revolutionists as four years later they sympathized with the Kentuckians and Virginians in their nullification agitation against the alien and sedition laws. Gradually, however, the tone of the paper changed, as did the tone of the community, at least to the extent of becoming Democratic and anti-Federal; for the people felt that the Easterners did not sympathize with them either in their contests with the Indians or in their desire to control the Mississippi and the farther West. They grew to regard with particular vindictiveness the Federalists—

the aristocrats, as they styled them—of the southern seaboard States, notably of Virginia and South Carolina.

One pathetic feature of the paper was the recurrence of advertisements by persons whose friends and kinsfolk had been carried off by the Indians, and who anxiously sought any trace of them.

But the *Gazette* was used for the expression of opinions not only by the whites, but occasionally even by an Indian. One of the Cherokee chiefs, the Red Bird, put into the *Gazette*, for two buckskins, a talk to the Cherokee chief of the upper towns, in which he especially warned him to leave alone one William Cocke, "the white man who lived among the mulberry trees," for, said Red Bird, "the mulberry man talks very strong and runs very fast"; this same Cocke being afterwards one of the first two senators from Tennessee. The Red Bird ended his letter by the expression of the rather quaint wish, "that all the bad people on both sides were laid in the ground, for then there would not be so many mush men trying to make people to believe they were warriors." [1]

Blount brought his family to Tennessee at once, and took the lead in trying to build up institutions for higher education. After a good deal of difficulty an academy was organized under the title of Blount College, and was opened as soon as a suffi-

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, November 3, 1792.

cient number of pupils could be gotten together; there were already two other colleges in the Territory, Greeneville and Washington, the latter being the academy founded by Doak. Like almost all other institutions of learning of the day, these three were under clerical control; but Blount College was chartered as a non-denomination institution, the first of its kind in the United States.[1] The clergyman and the lawyer, with the school-master, were still the typical men of letters in all the frontier communities. The doctor was not yet a prominent feature of life in the backwoods, though there is in the *Gazette* an advertisement of one who announces that he intends to come to practice "with a large stock of genuine medicines." [2]

The ordinary books were still school-books, books of law, and sermons or theological writings. The first books, or pamphlets, published in eastern Tennessee were brought out about this time at the *Gazette* office, and bore such titles as: *A Sermon on Psalmody*, by Rev. Hezekiah Balch; *A Discourse*, by the Rev. Samuel Carrick; and a legal essay called *Western Justice*.[3] There was also a slight effort, now and then, at literature of a lighter kind. The little western papers, like those in the

[1] See Edward T. Sanford's *Blount College and the University of Tennessee*, p. 13.

[2] Knoxville *Gazette*, June 19, 1794.

[3] *Ibid.*, January 30 and May 8, 1794.

East, had their poets' corners, often with the heading of "Sacred to the Muses," the poems ranging from "Lines to Myra" and "An Epitaph on John Topham" to "The Pernicious Consequences of Smoking Cigars." In an issue of the Knoxville *Gazette* there is advertised for sale a new song by a "gentleman of Col. McPherson's Blues, on a late expedition against the Pennsylvania Insurgents"; and also, in rather incongruous juxtaposition, *Toplady's Translation of Zanchi on Predestination.*

Settlers were thronging into east Tennessee, and many penetrated even to the Indian-harassed western district. In travelling to the western parts the immigrants generally banded together in large parties, led by some man of note. Among those who arrived in 1792 was the old North Carolina Indian fighter, General Griffith Rutherford. He wished to settle on the Cumberland, and to take thither all his company, with a large number of wagons, and he sent to Blount begging that a road might be cut through the wilderness for the wagons; or, if this could not be done, that some man would blaze the route, "in which case," said he, "there would be hands of our own that could cut as fast as wagons could march." [1]

In 1794, there being five thousand free male inhabitants, as provided by law, Tennessee became entitled to a Territorial Legislature, and the gover-

[1] Blount MSS., Rutherford to Blount, May 25, 1792.

nor summoned the Assembly to meet at Knoxville on August 17th. So great was the danger from the Indians that a military company had to accompany the Cumberland legislators to and from the seat of government. For the same reason the judges on their circuits had to go accompanied by a military guard.

Among the first acts of this Territorial Legislature was that to establish higher institutions of learning; John Sevier was made a trustee in both Blount and Greeneville Colleges. A lottery was established for the purpose of building the Cumberland Road to Nashville, and another one to build a jail and stocks in Nashville. A pension act was passed for disabled soldiers and for widows and orphans, who were to be given an adequate allowance at the discretion of the county court. A poll-tax of twenty-five cents on all taxable white polls was laid, and on every taxable negro poll fifty cents. Land was taxed at the rate of twenty-five cents a hundred acres, town lots one dollar; while a stud-horse was taxed four dollars. Thus, taxes were laid exclusively upon free males, upon slaves, lands, town lots, and stud-horses—a rather queer combination.[1]

Various industries were started, as the people began to demand not only the necessaries of life,

[1] *Laws of Tennessee*, Knoxville, 1803. First Session of Territorial Legislature, 1794.

but the comforts and even occasionally the luxuries. There were plenty of blacksmith shops; and a goldsmith and jeweller set up his establishment. In his advertisement he shows that he was prepared to do some work which would be alien to his modern representative, for he notifies the citizens that he makes "rifle guns in the neatest and most approved fashion."[1]

Ferries were established at the important crossings, and taverns in the county-seats and small towns. One of the Knoxville taverns advertises its rates, which were one shilling for breakfast, one shilling for supper, and one-and-sixpence for dinner, board and lodging for a week costing two dollars, and board only for the same space of time nine shillings. Ferriage was threepence for a man and horse and two shillings for a wagon and team.

Various stores were established in the towns, the merchants obtaining most of their goods in the great trade centres of Philadelphia and Baltimore, and thence hauling them by wagon to the frontier. Most of the trade was carried on by barter. There was very little coin in the country, and but few bank-notes. Often the advertisement specified the kind of goods that would be taken and the different values at which they would be received. Thus, the salt works at Washington, Virginia, in

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, October 20, 1792.

advertising their salt, stated that they would sell it per bushel for seven shillings and sixpence, if paid in cash or prime furs; at ten shillings, if paid in bear or deer skins, beeswax, hemp, bacon, butter, or beef cattle; and at twelve shillings if in other trade and country produce, as was usual.[1] The prime furs were mink, coon, muskrat, wildcat, and beaver. Besides this, the stores advertised that they would take for their articles cash, beeswax, and country produce or tallow, hogs' lard in white walnut kegs, butter, pork, new feathers, good horses, and also corn, rye, oats, flax, and "old Congress money," the old Congress money being that issued by the Continental Congress and which had depreciated wonderfully in value. They also took certificates of indebtedness either from the State or the nation because of services performed against the Indians, and certificates of land claimed under various rights. The value of some of these commodities was evidently mainly speculative. The storekeepers often felt that where they had to accept such dubious substitutes for cash they desired to give no credit, and some of the advertisements run: "Cheap, ready money store, where no credit whatever will be given," and then proceed to describe what ready money was,—cash, furs, bacon, etc. The stores sold salt, ironmongery, pewterware, corduroys, rum, brandy,

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, June 1, 1793.

whisky, wine, ribbons, linen, calamancos, and in fact generally what would be found at that day in any store in the smaller towns of the older States. The best eight-by-ten crown glass "was regularly imported," and also "beautiful assortments of fashionable coat and vest buttons," as well as "brown and loaf sugar, coffee, chocolate, tea, and spices." In the towns the families had ceased to kill their own meat, and beef markets were established where fresh meat could be had twice a week.

Houses and lots were advertised for sale, and one result of the method of allowing the branded stock to range at large in the woods was that there were numerous advertisements for strayed horses, and even cattle, with descriptions of the brands and ear-marks. The people were already beginning to pay attention to the breeding of their horses, and fine stallions with pedigrees were advertised, though some of the advertisements show a certain indifference to purity of strain; one stallion being quoted as of "mixed fox-hunting and dray" breed. Rather curiously, the Chickasaw horses were continually mentioned as of special merit, together with those of imported stock. Attention was paid both to pacers and trotters.

The lottery was still a recognized method of raising money for every purpose, including the advancement of education and religion. One of the advertisements gives as one of the prizes a

negro, valued at £130, a horse at £10 and 500 acres of fine land without improvements at £1200.

Journeying to the long-settled districts of the East, persons went as they wished, in their own wagons or on their own horses; but to go from East Tennessee either to Kentucky or to the Cumberland district or to New Orleans, was a serious matter, because of the Indians. The Territorial authorities provided annually an escort for immigrants from the Holston country to the Cumberland, a distance of 110 miles through the wilderness, and the departure of this annual escort was advertised for weeks in advance.

Sometimes the escort was thus provided by the authorities. More often adventurers simply banded together; or else some enterprising man advertised that on a given date he should start and would provide protection for those who chose to accompany him. Thus, in the Knoxville *Gazette* for February 6, 1795, a boat captain gives public notice to all persons who wish to sail from the Holston country to New Orleans, that on March 1st, if the waters answer, his two boats will start, the *Mary* of twenty-five tons, and the *Little Polly* of fifteen tons. Those who had contracted for freight and passage are desired to attend previous to that period.

There was, of course, a good deal of lawlessness and a strong tendency to settle assault and battery

cases, in particular, out of court. The officers of justice at times had to subdue criminals by open force. Andrew Jackson, who was district attorney for the Western District, early acquired fame by the energy and success with which he put down any criminal who resisted the law. The worst offenders fled to the Mississippi Territory, there to live among Spaniards, Creoles, Indians, and lawless Americans. Lawyers drove a thriving business; but they had their own difficulties, to judge by one advertisement, which appears in the issue of the *Gazette* for March 23, 1793, where six of them give notice that thereafter they will give no legal advice unless it is legally paid for.

All the settlers, or at least all the settlers who had any ambition to rise in the world, were absorbed in land speculations—Blount, Robertson, and the other leaders as much so as anybody. They were continually in correspondence with one another about the purchase of land warrants, and about laying them out in the best localities. Of course, there was much jealousy and rivalry in the effort to get the best sites. Robertson, being farthest on the frontier, where there was most wild land, had peculiar advantages. Very soon after he settled in the Cumberland district at the close of the Revolutionary War, Blount had entered into an agreement with him for a joint land speculation. Blount was to purchase land claims

from both officers and soldiers amounting in all to fifty thousand acres and enter them for the Western Territory, while Robertson was to survey and locate the claims, receiving one fourth of the whole for his reward.[1] Their connection continued during Blount's term as governor, and Blount's letters to Robertson contain much advice as to how the warrants shall be laid out. Wherever possible they were of course laid outside the Indian boundaries; but, like every one else, Blount and Robertson knew that eventually the Indian lands would come into the possession of the United States, and in view of the utter confusion of the titles, and especially in view of the way the Indians as well as the whites continually broke the treaties and rendered it necessary to make new ones, both Blount and Robertson were willing to place claims on the Indian lands and trust to luck to make the claims good if ever a cession was made. The lands thus located were not lands upon which any Indian village stood. Generally, they were tracts of wilderness through which the Indians occasionally hunted, but as to which there was a question whether they had yet been formally ceded to the government.[2]

Blount also corresponded with many other men

[1] Blount MSS., Agreement between William Blount and James Robertson, October 30, 1783.

[2] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, April 29, 1792.

on the question of these land speculations, and it is amusing to read the expressions of horror of his correspondents when they read that Tennessee had imposed a land tax.[1] By his activity he became a very large landed proprietor, and when Tennessee was made a State he was taxed on 73,252 acres in all. The tax was not excessive, being but $179.72.[2] It was, of course, entirely proper for Blount to get possession of the land in this way. The theory of government on the frontier was that each man should be paid a small salary, and be allowed to exercise his private business just as long as it did not interfere with his public duties. Blount's land speculations were similar to those in which almost every other prominent American, in public or private life, was engaged. Neither Congress nor the States had as yet seen the wisdom of allowing the land to be sold only in small parcels to actual occupants, and the favorite kind of speculation was the organization of land companies. Of course, there were other kinds of business in which prominent men took part. Sevier was interested not only in land, but in various mercantile ventures of a more or less speculative kind; he acted as an intermediary with the big

[1] Blount MSS., Thomas Hart to Blount, Lexington, Ky., March 29, 1795.

[2] *Ibid.*, Return of taxable property of Blount, Nashville, September 9, 1796.

importers, who were willing to furnish some of the stores with six months' credit if they could be guaranteed a settlement at the end of that time.[1]

One of the characteristics of all the leading frontiersmen was not only the way in which they combined business enterprises with their work as government officials and as Indian fighters, but the readiness with which they turned from one business enterprise to another. One of Blount's Kentucky correspondents, Thomas Hart, the grandfather of Benton, in his letter to Blount, shows these traits in typical fashion. He was engaged in various land speculations with Blount,[2] and was always writing to him about locating land warrants, advertising the same as required by law, and the like. He and Blount held some tens of thousands of acres of the Henderson claim, and Hart proposed that they should lay it out in five-hundred-acre tracts, to be rented to farmers, with the idea that each farmer should receive ten cows and calves to start with—a proposition which was, of course, hopeless, as the pioneers would not lease lands when it was so easy to obtain freeholds. In his letters, Hart mentioned cheerfully that though he was sixty-three years old he was just as well able to carry on his manufacturing business, and

[1] Blount MSS., David Allison to Blount, October 16, 1791.

[2] Clay MSS., Blount to Hart, Knoxville, February 9, 1794. This was just as Hart was moving to Kentucky.

on occasion to leave it and play pioneer, as he ever had been, remarking that he "never would be satisfied in the world while new countries could be found," and that his intention, now that he had moved to Kentucky, was to push the mercantile business as long as the Indian war continued and money was plenty, and when that failed, to turn his attention to farming and to divide up those of his lands he could not till himself, to be rented by others.[1]

This letter to Blount shows, by the way, as was shown by Madison's correspondent from Kentucky, that the Indian war, scourge though it was to the frontiersmen as a whole, brought some attendant benefits in its wake by putting a stimulus on the trade of the merchants and bringing ready money into the country. It must not be forgotten, however, that men like Hart and Blount, though in some ways they were benefited by the war, were in other ways very much injured, and that, moreover, they consistently strove to do justice to the Indians and to put a stop to hostilities.

In his letters Colonel Hart betrays a hearty, healthy love of life, and capacity to enjoy it, and make the best of it, which fortunately exist in many Kentucky and Tennessee families to this day. He wanted money, but the reason he

[1] Blount MSS., Thomas Hart to Blount, December 23, 1793.

wanted it was to use it in having a good time for himself and his friends, writing: "I feel all the ardor and spirit for business I did forty years ago, and see myself more capable to conduct it. Oh, if my old friend Uncle Jacob was but living in this country, what pleasure we should have in raking up money and spending it with our friends!" and he closed by earnestly entreating Blount and his family to come to Kentucky, which he assured him was the finest country in the world, with, moreover, "a very pleasant society, for," said he, "I can say with truth that the society of this place is equal, if not superior, to any that can be found in any inland town in the United States, for there is not a day that passes over our heads but I can have half a dozen strange gentlemen to dine with us, and they are from all parts of the Union." [1]

The one overshadowing fact in the history of Tennessee during Blount's term as governor was the Indian warfare. Hostilities with the Indians were never ceasing, and, so far as Tennessee was concerned, during these six years it was the Indians, and not the whites, who were habitually the aggressors and wrong-doers. The Indian warfare in the Territory during these years deserves some study because it was typical of what occurred elsewhere. It illustrates forcibly the fact that under

[1] Blount MSS., Hart to Blount, Lexington, February 15, 1795.

the actual conditions of settlement wars were inevitable. For it is admitted that the land of the Indians had to be taken and that the continent had to be settled by white men. It must be further admitted that the settlement could not have taken place save after war. The whites might be to blame in some cases, and the Indians in others; but under no combination of circumstances was it possible to retain possession of the country save as the result of war, or of a peace obtained by the fear of war. Any peace which did not surrender the land was sure in the end to be broken by the whites; and a peace which did surrender the land would be broken by the Indians. The history of Tennessee during the three years from 1793 to 1795 offers an admirable case in point. In 1785, the United States Commissioners concluded the treaty of Hopewell with the Indians, and solemnly guaranteed them certain lands. The whites contemptuously disregarded this treaty and seized the lands which it guaranteed to the Indians, being themselves the aggressors, and paying no heed to the plighted word of the Government, while the Government itself was too weak to make the frontiersmen keep faith. The treaties of New York and of Holston with the Creeks and Cherokees in 1790 and 1791 were fairly entered into by fully authorized representatives of the tribes. Under them, for a valuable consideration, and of their

own motion, the Creeks and Cherokees solemnly surrendered all title to what is now the territory of Tennessee, save to a few tracts mostly in the West and Southeast; and much of the land which was thus ceded they had ceded before. Nevertheless, the peace thus solemnly made was immediately violated by the Indians themselves. The whites were not the aggressors in any way, and, on the contrary, thanks to the wish of the United States authorities for peace, and to the care with which Blount strove to carry out the will of the Federal Government, they for a long time refrained even from retaliating when injured; yet the Indians robbed and plundered them even more freely than when the whites themselves had been the aggressors and had broken the treaty.

Before making the treaty of Holston, Blount had been in correspondence with Benjamin Hawkins, a man who had always been greatly interested in Indian affairs. He was a prominent politician in North Carolina, and afterwards for many years agent among the southern Indians. He had been concerned in several of the treaties. He warned Blount that since the treaty of Hopewell the whites, and not the Indians, had been the aggressors; and also warned him not to try to get too much land from the Indians, or to take away too great an extent of their hunting-grounds, which would only help the great land companies, but to

be content with the thirty-fifth parallel for a southern boundary. Blount paid much heed to this advice, and by the treaty of Holston he obtained from the Indians little more than what the tribes had previously granted, except that they confirmed to the whites the country upon which the pioneers were already settled. The Cumberland district had already been granted over and over again by the Indians in special treaties—to Henderson, to the North Carolinians, and to the United States. The Creeks, in particular, never had had any claim to this Cumberland country, which was a hundred miles and over from any of their towns. All the use they had ever made of it was to visit it with their hunting parties, as did the Cherokees, Choctaws, Chickasaws, Shawnees, Delawares, and many others. Yet the Creeks and other Indians had the effrontery afterwards to assert that the Cumberland country had never been ceded at all, and that as the settlers in it were thus outside of the territory properly belonging to the United States, they were not entitled to protection under the treaty entered into with the latter.

Blount was vigilant and active in seeing that none of the frontiersmen trespassed on the Indian lands, and when a party of men, claiming authority under Georgia, started to settle at the Muscle Shoals, he co-operated actively with the Indians in

[1] Blount MSS., Hawkins to Blount, March 10, 1791.

having them brought back, and did his best, though in vain, to persuade the grand jury to indict the offenders.[1] He was explicit in his orders to Sevier, to Robertson, and to District-Attorney Jackson that they should promptly punish any white man who violated the provisions of the treaty; and over a year after it had been entered into he was able to write in explicit terms that "not a single settler had built a house, or made a settlement of any kind, on the Cherokee lands, and that no Indians had been killed by the whites excepting in defence of their lives and property."[2] Robertson heartily co-operated with Blount, as did Sevier, in the effort to keep peace, Robertson showing much good sense and self-control, and acquiescing in Blount's desire that nothing should be done "inconsistent with the good of the nation as a whole," and that "the faith of the nation should be kept."[3]

The Indians, as a body, showed no appreciation whatever of these efforts to keep the peace, and plundered and murdered quite as freely as before the treaties, or as when the whites themselves were the aggressors. The Creek confederacy was in a condition of utter disorganization, McGillivray's

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, September 3, 1791.

[2] *Ibid.*, Blount to Robertson, January 2, 1792; to Bloody Fellow, September 13, 1792.

[3] Blount MSS., Robertson to Blount, January 17, 1793.

authority was repudiated, and most of the towns scornfully refused to obey the treaty into which their representatives had entered at New York. A tory adventurer named Bowles, who claimed to have the backing of the English Government, landed in the nation and set himself in opposition to McGillivray. The latter, who was no fighter, and whose tools were treachery and craft, fled to the protection of the Spaniards. Bowles, among other feats, plundered the stores of Panton, a white trader in the Spanish interest, and for a moment his authority seemed supreme; but the Spaniards, by a trick, got possession of him and put him in prison.

The Spaniards still claimed as their own the south western country, and were untiring in their efforts to keep the Indians united among themselves and hostile to the Americans. They concluded a formal treaty of friendship and of reciprocal guarantee with the Choctaws, Chickasaws, Creeks, and Cherokees, at Nogales, in the Choctaw country, on May 14, 1792.[1] The Indians entered into this treaty at the very time they had concluded wholly inconsistent treaties with the Americans. On the place of the treaty the Spaniards built a fort, which they named Fort Confederation, to perpetuate, as they hoped, the memory of the

[1] Draper MSS., Spanish Documents; letter of Carondelet to Duke of Alcudia, November 24, 1794.

confederation they had thus established among the southern Indians. By means of this fort they intended to control all the territory enclosed between the rivers Mississippi, Yazoo, Chickasaw, and Mobile. The Spaniards also expended large sums of money in arming the Creeks, and in bribing them to do, what they were quite willing to do of their own accord: that is, to prevent the demarcation of the boundary line as provided in the New York treaty—a treaty which Carondelet reported to his Court as "insulting and pernicious to Spain, the abrogation of which has lately been brought about by the intrigues with the Indians." [1]

At the same time that the bill for these expenses was submitted for audit to the home government the Spanish Governor also submitted his accounts for the expenses in organizing the expedition against the "English adventurer Bowles," and in negotiating with Wilkinson and the other Kentucky separatists, and also in establishing a Spanish post at the Chickasaw Bluffs, for which he had finally obtained the permission of the Chickasaws. The Americans, of course, regarded the establishment both of the fort at the Chickasaw Bluffs and the fort at Nogales as direct challenges; and Carondelet's accounts show that the frontiersmen were entirely justified in their belief that the Span-

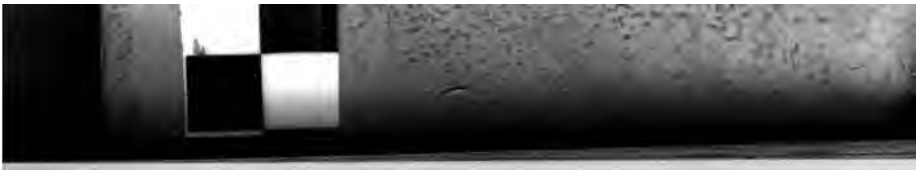
[1] Draper MSS., letter of Carondelet, New Orleans, September 25, 1795.

iards not only supplied the Creeks with arms and munitions of war, but actively interfered to prevent them from keeping faith and carrying out the treaties which they had signed. The Spaniards did not wish the Indians to go to war unless it was necessary as a last resort. They preferred that they should be peaceful, provided always they could prevent the intrusion of the Americans. Carondelet wrote: "We have inspired the Creeks with pacific intentions towards the United States, but with the precise restriction that there shall be no change of the boundaries" [1]; and he added that "to sustain our allied nations [of Indians] in the possession of their lands becomes therefore indispensable, both to preserve Louisiana to Spain, and in order to keep the Americans from the navigation of the Gulf." He expressed great uneasiness at the efforts of Robertson to foment war between the Chickasaws and Choctaws and the Creeks, and exerted all his powers to keep the Indian nations at peace with one another and united against the settler-folk.[2]

The Spaniards, though with far more infamous and deliberate deceit and far grosser treachery, were pursuing towards the United States and the

[1] Draper MSS., Spanish Documents; Carondelet's Report, October 23, 1793.

[2] *Ibid.*, Carondelet to Don Luis de las Casas, June 13, 1795, enclosing letter from Don M. G. de Lemos, Governor of Natchez.



southwestern Indians the policy pursued by the British towards the United States and the Northwestern Indians; with the difference that the Spanish Governor and his agents acted under the orders of the Court of Spain, while the English authorities connived at and profited by, rather than directly commanded, what was done by their subordinates. Carondelet expressly states that Colonel Gayoso and his other subordinates had been directed to unite the Indian nations in a defensive alliance, under the protection of Spain, with the object of opposing Blount, Robertson, and the frontiersmen, and of establishing the Cumberland River as the boundary between the Americans and the Indians. The reciprocal guarantee of their lands by the Creeks, Cherokees, Choctaws, and Chickasaws was, said Carondelet, the only way by which the Americans could be retained within their own boundaries.[1] The Spaniards devoted much attention to supporting those traders among the Indians who were faithful to the cause of Spain and could be relied upon to intrigue against the Americans.[2]

The divided condition of the Creeks, some of whom wished to carry out in good faith the treaty of New York, while the others threatened to attack

[1] Draper MSS., Carondelet to Alcudia, August 17, 1793.

[2] *Ibid.*, Manuel Gayoso de Lemos to Carondelet, Nogales, July 25, 1793.

whoever made any move towards putting the treaty into effect, puzzled Carondelet nearly as much as it did the United States authorities; and he endeavored to force the Creeks to abstain from warfare with the Chickasaws by refusing to supply them with munitions of war for any such purpose, or for any other except to oppose the frontiersmen. He put great faith in the endeavor to treat the Americans not as one nation, but as an assemblage of different communities. The Spaniards sought to placate the Kentuckians by promising to reduce the duties on the goods that came down-stream to New Orleans by six per cent., and thus to prevent an outbreak on their part; at the same time the United States Government was kept occupied by idle negotiations. Carondelet further hoped to restrain the Cumberland people by fear of the Creek and Cherokee nations, who, he remarked, "had never ceased to commit hostilities upon them, and to profess implacable hatred for them." [1] He reported to the Spanish Court that Spain had no means of molesting the Americans save through the Indians, as it would not be possible with an army to make a serious impression on the "ferocious and well-armed" frontier people, favored as they would be by their knowledge of the country; whereas the Indians, if properly supported, offered an excellent defence, supplying from the south-

[1] Draper MSS., Carondelet to De Lemos, August 15, 1793.

western tribes fifteen thousand warriors, whose keep in time of peace cost Spain not more than fifty thousand dollars a year, and even in time of war not more than a hundred and fifty thousand.[1]

The Spaniards in this manner actively fomented hostilities among the Creeks and Cherokees. Their support explained much in the attitude of these peoples, but doubtless the war would have gone on anyhow until the savages were thoroughly cowed by force of arms. The chief causes for the incessantly renewed hostilities were the desire of the young braves for blood and glory, a vague but well-founded belief among the Indians that the white advance meant their ruin unless stayed by an appeal to arms, and, more important still, the absolute lack of any central authority among the tribesmen which could compel them all to war together effectively on the one hand, or all to make peace on the other.

Blount was Superintendent of Indian Affairs for the southern Indians as well as Governor of the Territory; and in addition the Federal authorities established an Indian agent, directly responsible to themselves, among the Creeks. His name was James Seagrove. He did his best to bring about a peace, and, like all Indian agents, he was apt to take an unduly harsh view of the deeds of the frontiersmen, and to consider them the real aggressors in

[1] Draper MSS., Carondelet to Alcudia, September 27, 1793.

any trouble. Of necessity, his point of view was wholly different from that of the border settlers. He was promptly informed of all the outrages and aggressions committed by the whites, while he heard little or nothing of the parties of young braves, bent on rapine, who continually fell on the frontiers; whereas the frontiersmen came in contact only with these war bands, and when their kinsfolk had been murdered and their cattle driven off, they were generally ready to take vengeance on the first Indians they could find. Even Seagrove, however, was at times hopelessly puzzled by the attitude of the Indians. He was obliged to admit that they were the first offenders after the conclusion of the treaties of New York and Holston, and that for a long time the settlers behaved with great moderation in refraining from revenging the outrages committed on them by the Indians, which, he remarked, would have to be stopped if peace was to be preserved.[1]

As the Government took no efficient steps to preserve the peace, either by chastising the Indians or by bridling the ill-judged vengeance of the frontier inhabitants, many of the latter soon grew to hate and despise those by whom they were neither protected nor restrained. The disorderly element got the upper hand on the Georgia frontier, where

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., Seagrove to the Secretary of War, St. Mary's, June 14, 1792.

the backwoodsmen did all they could to involve the nation in a general Indian war; and displayed the most defiant and mutinous spirit toward the officers, civil and military, of the United States Government.[1] As for the Creeks, Seagrove found it exceedingly hard to tell who of them were traitors and who were not; and indeed the chiefs would probably themselves have found the task difficult, for they were obliged to waver more or less in their course as the fickle tribesmen were swayed by impulses towards peace or war. One of the men whom Seagrove finally grew to regard as a confirmed traitor was the chief McGillivray. He was probably quite right in his estimate of the half-breed's character; and, on the other hand, McGillivray doubtless had as an excuse the fact that the perpetual intrigues of Spanish officers, American traders, British adventurers, Creek chiefs who wished peace, and Creek warriors who wished war, made it out of the question for him to follow any settled policy. He wrote to Seagrove: "It is no wonder the Indians are distracted, when they are tampered with on every side. I am myself in the situation of a keeper of Bedlam, and nearly fit for an inhabitant."[2] However, what he did

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., Seagrove to the President, Rock Landing, on the Oconee, in Georgia, July 17, 1792.

[2] *Ibid.*, McGillivray to Seagrove, May 18, 1793.

succeeded to that title, for his influence had greatly waned, and in 1793 he died.

In the Georgia country the backwoodsmen were very rough and lawless, and were always prone to make aggressions on the red men. Nevertheless, even in the case of Georgia in 1791 and 1792 the chief fault lay with the Indians. They refused to make good the land cession which they had already guaranteed in the treaty of New York and which certain of their towns had previously guaranteed to make in the various more or less fraudulent treaties entered into with the State of Georgia separately. In addition to this their plundering parties continually went among the Georgians. The latter in their efforts to retaliate, struck the hostile and the peaceful alike; and as time went on they made ready to take forcible possession of the lands they coveted, without regard to whether or not these lands had been ceded in the treaty.

In the Tennessee country the wrong was wholly with the Indians. Some of the chiefs of the Cherokees went to Philadelphia at the beginning of the year 1792 to request certain modifications of the treaty of Holston, notably an increase in their annuity, which was granted.[1] The General Government had conducted the treaties in good faith and had given the Indians what they asked.

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., Secretary of War to Governor Blount, January 31, 1792.

The frontiersmen did not molest them in any way or trespass upon their lands; yet their ravages continued without cessation. The authorities at Washington made but feeble efforts to check these outrages, and protect the southwestern settlers. Yet at this time Tennessee was doing her full part in sustaining the National Government in the war against the northwestern tribes; a company of Tennessee militia, under Captain Jacob Tipton, joined St. Clair's army, and Tipton was slain at the defeat, where he fought with the utmost bravery.[1] Not unnaturally, the Tennesseeans, and especially the settlers on the far-off Cumberland, felt it a hardship for the United States to neglect their defence at the very time that they were furnishing their quota of soldiers for an offensive war against nations in whose subdual they had but an indirect interest. Robertson wrote to Blount that their silence and remoteness was the cause why the interests of the Cumberland settlers were thus neglected, while the Kentuckians were amply protected.[2]

Naturally, the Tennesseeans, conscious that they had not wronged the Indians, and had scrupulously observed the treaty, grew embittered over the

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, December 17, 1791. I use the word "Tennessee" for convenience; it was not at this time used in this sense.

[2] Robertson MSS., Robertson's letter, Nashville, August 25, 1791.

wanton Indian outrages. They were entirely at a loss to explain the reason why the warfare against them was waged with such ferocity. Sevier wrote to Madison, with whom he frequently corresponded: "This country is wholly involved in a war with the Creek and Cherokee Indians, and I am not able to suggest the reasons or the pretended cause of their depredations. The successes of the northern tribes over our late unfortunate armies have created great exultation throughout the whole southern Indians, and the probabilities may be they expect to be equally successful. The Spaniards are making use of all their art to draw over the southern tribes, and I fear may have stimulated them to commence their hostilities. Governor Blount has indefatigably labored to keep these people in a pacific humor, but in vain. War is unavoidable, however ruinous and calamitous it may be."[1] The Federal Government was most reluctant to look facts in the face and acknowledge that the hostilities were serious, and that they were unprovoked by the whites. The Secretary of War reported to the President that the offenders were doubtless merely a small banditti of Creeks and Cherokees, with a few Shawnees who possessed no fixed residence, and in groping for a remedy he weakly suggested that inasmuch as many of the

[1] State Department MSS., Madison Papers, Sevier's letter, October 30, 1792.

Cherokees seemed to be dissatisfied with the boundary line they had established by treaty it would perhaps be well to alter it.[1] Of course, the adoption of such a measure would have amounted to putting a premium on murder and treachery.

If the Easterners were insensible to the western need for a vigorous Indian war, many of the Westerners showed as little appreciation of the necessity for any Indian war which did not immediately concern themselves. Individual Kentuckians, individual colonels and captains of the Kentucky militia, were always ready to march to the help of the Tennesseeans against the southern Indians; but the highest officials of Kentucky were almost as anxious as the Federal authorities to prevent any war save that with the tribes northwest of the Ohio. One of the Kentucky senators, Brown, in writing to the Governor, Isaac Shelby, laid particular stress upon the fact that nothing but the most urgent necessity could justify a war with the southern Indians.[2] Shelby himself sympathized with this feeling. He knew what an Indian war was, for he had owed his election largely to his record as an Indian fighter and to the confidence the Kentuckians felt in his power to protect them from

[1] State Department MSS., Washington Papers, Secretary of War to the President, July 28, and August 5, 1792.

[2] Shelby MSS., J. Brown to Isaac Shelby, Philadelphia, June 2, 1793.

them red ties.[1] His correspondence is filled with letters in relation to Indian affairs, requests to authorize the use of spies, requests to establish guards along the Wilderness Road and to garrison blockhouses on the frontier; and sometimes there are more pathetic letters—from a husband who had lost a wife, or from an "old frail woman" who wished to learn if the Governor could not by some means get news of her little granddaughter, who had been captured in the wilderness two years before by a party of Indians.[2] He realized fully what hostilities meant, and had no desire to see his State plunged into any Indian war which could be avoided.

Yet, in spite of this cautious attitude, Shelby had much influence with the people of the Tennessee territory. They confided to him their indignation with Blount for stopping Logan's march to the aid of Robertson; while on the other hand the Virginians, when anxious to prevent the Cumberland settlers from breaking the peace, besought him to use his influence with them in order to make them do what was right.[3] When such a man as Shelby was reluctant to see the United

[1] Shelby MSS., M. D. Hardin to Isaac Shelby, April 10, 1792, etc.

[2] *Ibid.*, letter of Mary Mitchell to Isaac Shelby, May 1, 1793.

[3] *Ibid.*, Arthur Campbell to Shelby, January 6, 1790; letter from Cumberland to Shelby, May 11, 1793; John Logan to Shelby, June 19, 1794; petition of inhabitants of Nelson County, May 9, 1793.

States enter into open hostilities with the southern Indians, there is small cause for wonder in the fact that the authorities at the national capital did their best to deceive themselves into the belief that there was no real cause for war.

Inability to look facts in the face did not alter the facts. The Indian ravages in the Southern Territory grew steadily more and more serious. The difficulties of the settlers were enormously increased because the United States strictly forbade any offensive measures. The militia were allowed to drive off any war bands found among the settlements with evidently hostile intent; but, acting under the explicit, often repeated, and emphatic commands of the General Government, Blount was obliged to order the militia under no circumstances to assume the offensive, or to cross into the Indian hunting-grounds beyond the boundaries established by the treaty of Holston.[1] The inhabitants of the Cumberland region, and of the frontier counties generally, petitioned strongly against this, stating that "the frontiers will break if the inroads of the savages are not checked by counter expeditions."[2] It was a very disagreeable situation for Blount, who, in carrying out the orders of the Federal authorities, had to incur the ill-will of the people whom he had been appointed to govern;

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, April 1, 1792.
[2] *Ibid.*, February 1, 1792.

but even at the cost of being supposed to be lukewarm in the cause of the settlers, he loyally endeavored to execute the commands of his superiors. Yet like every other man acquainted by actual experience with frontier life and Indian warfare, he knew the folly of defensive war against Indians. At this very time the officers on the frontier of South Carolina, which was not a State that was at all inclined to unjust aggression against the Indians, notified the Governor that the defensive war was "expensive, hazardous, and distressing" to the settlers, because the Indians "had such advantages, being so wolfish in their manner and so savage in their nature," that it was impossible to make war upon them on equal terms if the settlers were confined to defending themselves in their own country, whereas a speedy and spirited counter-attack upon them in their homes would probably reduce them to peace, as their mode of warfare fitted them much less to oppose such an attack than to "take skulking, wolfish advantages of the defenceless" settlers.[1]

The difficulties of Blount and the Tennessee frontiersmen were increased by the very fact that the Cherokees and Creeks still nominally remained at peace. The Indian towns nearest the frontier knew that they were jeopardized by the acts of

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., Robert Anderson to the Governor of South Carolina, September 20, 1792.

their wilder brethren, and generally strove to avoid committing any offence themselves. The war-parties from the remote towns were the chief offenders. Band after band came up from among the Creeks or from among the lower Cherokees, and, passing through the peaceful villages of the upper Cherokees, fell on the frontier, stole horses, ambushed men, killed or captured women and children, and returned whence they had come. In most cases it was quite impossible to determine even the tribe of the offenders with any certainty; and all that the frontiersmen knew was that their bloody trails led back towards the very villages where the Indians loudly professed that they were at peace. They soon grew to regard all the Indians with equal suspicion, and they were so goaded by the blows which they could not return that they were ready to take vengeance upon any one with a red skin, or at least to condone such vengeance when taken. The peaceful Cherokees, though they regretted these actions and were alarmed and disquieted at the probable consequences, were unwilling or unable to punish the aggressors.

Blount was soon at his wits' ends to prevent the outbreak of a general war. In November, 1792, he furnished the War Department with a list of scores of people—men, women, and children—who had been killed in Tennessee, chiefly in the

Cumberland district, since the signing of the treaty of Holston. Many others had been carried off, and were kept in slavery. Among the wounded were General Robertson and one of his sons, who were shot, although not fatally, in May, 1792, while working on their farm. Both Creeks and Cherokees took part in the outrages, and the Chickamauga towns on the Tennessee, at Running Water, Nickajack, and in the neighborhood, ultimately supplied the most persistent wrong-doers.[1]

As Sevier remarked, the southern, no less than the northern Indians were much excited and encouraged by the defeat of St. Clair, coming as it did so close upon the defeat of Harmar. The double disaster to the American arms made the young braves very bold, and it became impossible for the elder men to restrain them.[2] The Creeks harassed the frontiers of Georgia somewhat, but devoted their main attention to the Tennesseeans, and especially to the isolated settlements on the Cumberland. The Chickamauga towns were right at the crossing place, both for the northern Indians when they came south and for the Creeks when they went north. Bands of Shawnees, who were

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., Blount to Secretary of War, November 8, 1792; also page 330, etc. Many of these facts will be found recited, not only in the correspondence of Blount, but in the Robertson MSS., in the Knoxville *Gazette*, and in Haywood, Ramsey, and Putnam.

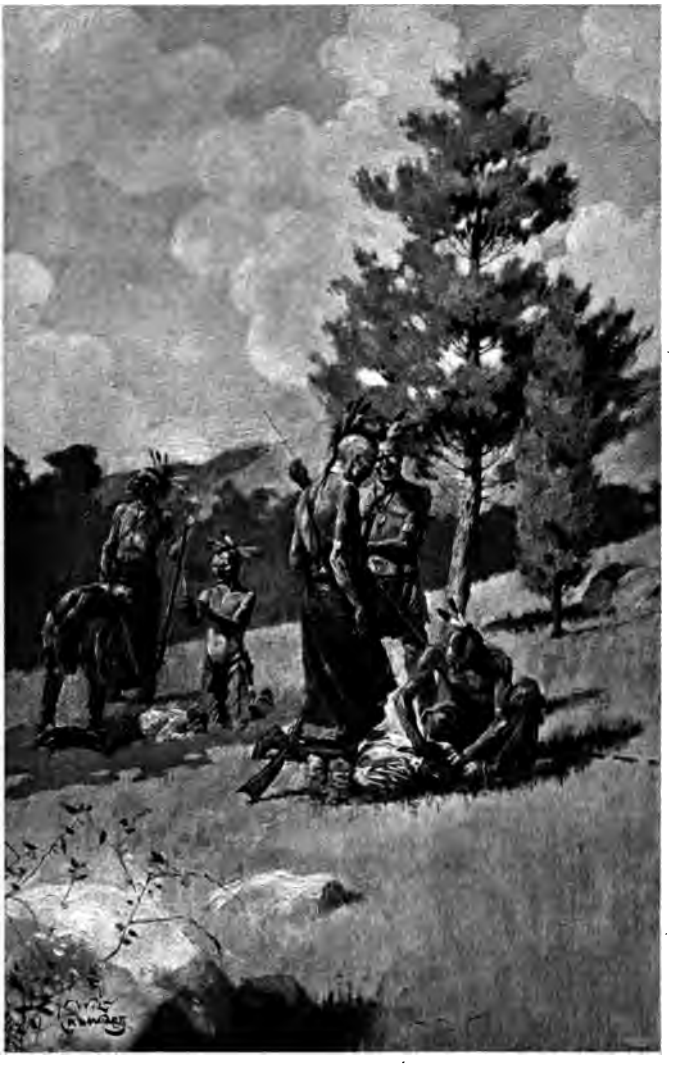
[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 263, 439, etc.

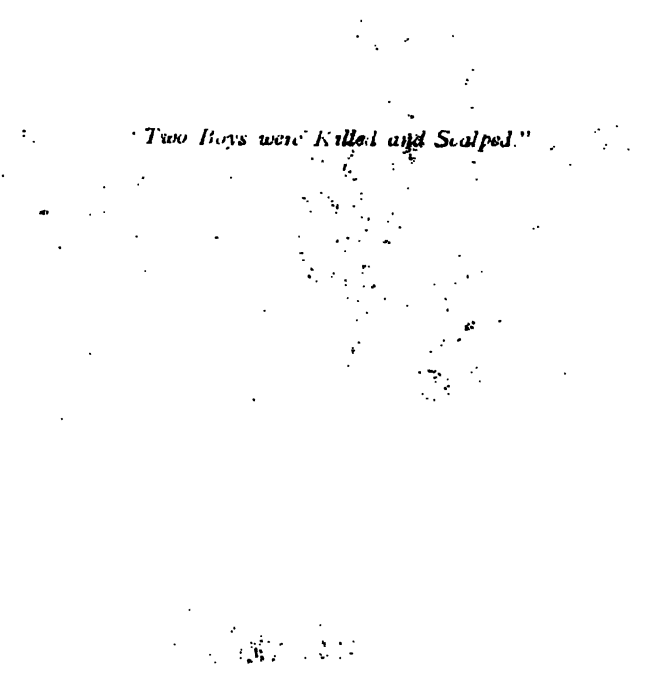
at this time the most inveterate of the enemies of the frontiersmen, passed much time among them; and the Creek war-parties, when they journeyed north to steal horses and get scalps, invariably stopped among them, and on their return stopped again to exhibit their trophies and hold scalp-dances. The natural effect was that the Chickamaugas, who were mainly lower town Cherokees, seeing the impunity with which the ravages were committed, and appreciating the fact that under the orders of the Government they could not be molested in their own homes by the whites, began to join in the raids; and their nearness to the settlements soon made them the worst offenders. One of their leading chiefs was John Watts, who was of mixed blood. Among all these southern Indians, half-breeds were far more numerous than among the northerners, and when the half-breeds lived with their mothers' people they usually became the deadliest enemies of their fathers' race. Yet, they generally preserved the father's name. In consequence, among the extraordinary Indian titles borne by the chiefs of the Creeks, Cherokees, and Choctaws—The Bloody Fellow, The Middle Striker, The Mad Dog, The Glass, The Breath—there were also many names like John Watts, Alexander Cornell, and James Colbert, which were common among the frontiersmen themselves.

These Chickamaugas and lower Cherokees had

solemnly entered into treaties of peace, and Blount had been taken in by their professions of friendship, and for some time was loath to believe that their warriors were among the war-parties who ravaged the settlements. By the spring of 1792, however, the fact of their hostility could no longer be concealed. Nevertheless, in May of that year the chiefs of the lower Cherokee towns joined with those of the upper towns in pressing Governor Blount to come to a council at Coyatee, where he was met by two thousand Cherokees, including all their principal chiefs and warriors.[1] The head men, not only from the upper towns, but from Nickajack and Running Water, including John Watts, solemnly assured Blount of their peaceful intentions, and expressed their regret at the outrages which they admitted had been committed by their young men. Blount told them plainly that he had the utmost difficulty in restraining the whites from taking vengeance for the numerous murders committed on the settlers, and warned them that if they wished to avert a war which would fall upon both the innocent and the guilty they must themselves keep the peace. The chiefs answered, with seeming earnestness, that they were most desirous of being at peace, and would certainly restrain their men; and they begged for the treaty goods which Blount had in his posses-

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, May 20, 1792.





"Two Boys were Killed and Scalped."

sion. So sincere did they seem that he gave them the goods.[1]

This meeting began on the 17th of May; yet on the 16th, within twelve miles of Knoxville, two boys were killed and scalped while picking strawberries, and on the 13th a girl had been scalped within four miles of Nashville; and on the 17th itself, while Judge Campbell, of the Territorial Court, was returning from the Cumberland Circuit, his party was attacked, and one killed.[2]

When such outrages were committed at the very time the treaty was being held, it was hopeless to expect peace. In September, the Chickamaugas threw off the mask and made open war. When the news was received, Blount called out the militia and sent word to Robertson that some friendly Cherokees had given warning that a big war-party was about to fall on the settlements round Nashville.[3] Finding that the warning had been given, the Chickamauga chiefs sought to lull their foes into security by a rather adroit piece of treachery. Two of their chiefs, The Glass and The Bloody Fellow, wrote to Blount complaining that they had assembled their warriors because they were

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, March 24, 1792; *American State Papers*, iv., Blount to Secretary of War, June 2, 1792, with minutes of conference at Coyatee.

[2] Knoxville *Gazette*, June 2, 1792.

[3] *American State Papers*, iv., Blount to Secretary of War, September 11, 1792.

alarmed over rumors of a desire on the part of the whites to maltreat them; and on the receipt of assurances from Blount that they were mistaken, they announced their pleasure and stated that no hostilities would be undertaken. Blount was much relieved at this, and thought that the danger of an outbreak was past. Accordingly, he wrote to Robertson, telling him that he could disband his troops, as there was no longer need of them. Robertson, however, knew the Indian character as few men did know it, and, moreover, he had received confidential information about the impending raid from a half-breed and a Frenchman who were among the Indians. He did not disband his troops, and wrote to Blount that The Glass and The Bloody Fellow had undoubtedly written as they did simply to deceive him and to secure their villages from a counter-attack while they were off on their raid against the Cumberland people. Accordingly, three hundred militia were put under arms.[1]

It was well that the whites were on their guard. Towards the end of September, a big war-party, under the command of John Watts and including some two hundred Cherokees, eighty Creeks, and

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, September 6, 1792; Blount to The Bloody Fellow, September 10, 1792; to Robertson, September 12; to The Glass, September 13; to The Bloody Fellow, September 13; to Robertson, September 14; Robertson to Blount, September 26, 1792.

some Shawnees, left the Chickamauga towns and marched swiftly and silently to the Cumberland district. They attempted to surprise one of the more considerable of the lonely little forted towns. It was known as Buchanan's Station, and in it there were several families, including fifteen "gun-men." Two spies went out from it to scour the country and give warning of any Indian advance; but with the Cherokees were two very white half-breeds, whose Indian blood was scarcely noticeable, and these two men met the spies and decoyed them to their death. The Indians then, soon after midnight on the 30th of September, sought to rush the station by surprise. The alarm was given by the running of the frightened cattle, and when the sentinel fired at the assailants they were not ten yards from the gate of the blockhouse. The barred door withstood the shock and the flame-flashes lit up the night as the gun-men fired through the loopholes. The Indians tried to burn the fort, one of the chiefs, a half-breed, leaping on the roof; he was shot through the thigh and rolled off; but he stayed close to the logs, trying to light them with his torch, alternately blowing it into a blaze and halloing to the Indians to keep on with the attack. However, he was slain, as was the Shawnee head chief and several warriors, while John Watts, leader of the expedition, was shot through both thighs. The log walls of the grim

little blockhouse stood out black in the fitful glare of the cane torches; and tongues of red fire streamed into the night as the rifles rang. The attack had failed, and the throng of dark, flitting forms faded into the gloom as the baffled Indians retreated. So disheartened were they by the check, and by the loss they had suffered, that they did not further molest the settlements, but fell back to their strongholds across the Tennessee. Among the Cherokee chiefs who led the raid were two signers of the treaty of Holston.[1]

After this the war was open, so far as the Indians of the lower Cherokee towns and many of the Creek towns were concerned; but the whites were still restrained by strict orders from the United States authorities, who refused to allow them to retaliate. Outrage followed outrage in monotonously bloody succession. The Creeks were the worst offenders in point of numbers, but the lower Cherokees from the Chickamauga towns did most harm according to their power. Sometimes the bands that entered the settlements were several hundred strong; but their chief object was plunder, and they rarely attacked the strong places of the white frontiersmen, though they forced them to keep huddled in the stockaded stations;

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, October 17, 1792; Knoxville *Gazette*, October 10 and October 20, 1792; Brown's "Narrative," in *Southwestern Monthly*.

nor did they often fight a pitched battle with the larger bodies of militia. There is no reason for reciting in full the countless deeds of rapine and murder. The incidents, though with infinite variety of detail, were in substance the same as in all the Indian wars of the backwoods. Men, women, and children were killed or captured; outlying cabins were attacked and burned; the husbandman was shot as he worked in the field, and the housewife as she went for water. The victim was now a militiaman on his way to join his company, now one of a party of immigrants, now a settler on his lonely farm, and now a justice of the peace going to court, or a Baptist preacher striving to reach the Cumberland country that he might preach the word of God to the people who had among them no religious instructor. The express-messengers and post-riders, who went through the wilderness from one commander to the other, always rode at the hazard of their lives. In one of Blount's letters to Robertson he remarks: "Your letter of the 6th of February sent express by James Russell was handed to me, much stained with his blood, by Mr. Shannon, who accompanied him." Russell had been wounded in an ambuscade, and his fifty dollars were dearly earned.[1]

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, March 8, 1794. The files of the Knoxville *Gazette* are full of details of these outrages, and so are the letters of Blount, to the Secretary of

The Indians were even more fond of horse-stealing than of murder, and they found a ready market for their horses not only in their own nations and among the Spaniards, but among the American frontiersmen themselves. Many of the unscrupulous white scoundrels who lived on the borders of the Indian country made a regular practice of receiving the stolen horses. As soon as a horse was driven from the Tennessee or Cumberland it was hurried through the Indian country to the Carolina or Georgia frontiers, where the red thieves delivered it to the foul white receivers, who took it to some town on the seaboard, so as effectually to prevent a recovery. At Swannanoa, in North Carolina, among the lawless settlements at the foot of the Oconee Mountain, in South Carolina, and at Tugaloo, in Georgia, there were regular markets for these stolen horses.[1] There were then, and continued to exist as long as the frontier lasted, plenty of white men who, though ready enough to wrong the Indians, were equally ready to profit by the wrongs they inflicted on the white settlers, and

War, given in the *American State Papers*, as well as the letters of Blount and Robertson in the two bound volumes of Robertson MSS. Many of them are quoted in more accessible form in Haywood.

[1] Blount to the Secretary of War, May 5, 1792, and November 10, 1794. As before, I use the word "Tennessee" instead of "Southwestern Territory" for convenience; it was not regularly employed until 1796.

to encourage their misdeeds if profit was thereby to be made. Very little evil-doing of this kind took place in Tennessee, for Blount, backed by Sevier and Robertson, was vigilant to put it down; but as yet the Federal Government was not firm in its seat, and its arm was not long enough to reach into the remote frontier districts, where lawlessness of every kind throve, and the whites wronged one another as recklessly as they wronged the Indians.

The white scoundrels throve in the confusion of a nominal peace which the savages broke at will; but the honest frontiersmen really suffered more than if there had been open war, as the Federal Government refused to allow raids to be carried into the Indian territory, and in consequence the marauding Indians could at any time reach a place of safety. The blockhouses were of little consequence in putting a stop to Indian attacks. The most efficient means of defence was the employment of the hardiest and best hunters as scouts or spies, for they travelled hither and thither through the woods and continually harried the war-parties.[1] The militia bands also travelled to and fro, marching to the rescue of some threatened settlement, or seeking to intercept the attacking bands or to overtake those who had delivered their stroke and were returning to the Indian country. Generally

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., p. 364; letter of Secretary of War, May 30, 1793.

they failed in the pursuit. Occasionally they were themselves ambushed, attacked, and dispersed; sometimes they overtook and scattered their foes. In such a case they were as little apt to show mercy to the defeated as were the Indians themselves. Blount issued strict orders that squaws and children were not to be slain, and the frontiersmen did generally refuse to copy their antagonists in butchering the women and children in cold blood. When an attack was made on a camp, however, it was no uncommon thing to have the squaws killed while the fight was hot. Blount, in one of his letters to Robertson, after the Cumberland militia had attacked and destroyed a Creek war-party which had murdered a settler, expressed his pleasure at the perseverance with which the militia captain had followed the Indians to the banks of the Tennessee, where he had been lucky enough to overtake them in a position where not one was able to escape. Blount especially complimented him upon having spared the two squaws "as all civilized people should"; and he added that in so doing the captain's conduct offered a most agreeable contrast to the behavior of some of his fellow-citizens under like circumstances.[1]

Repeated efforts were made to secure peace with the Indians. Andrew Pickens, of South Carolina, was sent to the exposed frontier in 1792 to act as

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount's letter, March 8, 1794.

Peace Commissioner. Pickens was a high-minded and honorable man, who never hesitated to condemn the frontiersmen when they wronged the Indians, and he was a champion of the latter wherever possible. He came out with every hope and belief that he could make a permanent treaty; but after having been some time on the border he was obliged to admit that there was no chance of bringing about even a truce, and that the nominal peace that obtained was worse for the settlers than actual war. He wrote to Blount that though he earnestly hoped the people of the border would observe the treaty, yet that the Cherokees had done more damage, especially in the way of horse-stealing, since the treaty was signed than ever before, and that it was not possible to say what the frontier inhabitants might be provoked to do. He continued: "While a part, and that the ostensible ruling part, of a nation affect to be at, and I believe really are for, peace and the more active young men are frequently killing people and stealing horses, it is extremely difficult to know how to act. The people, even the most exposed, would prefer an open war to such a situation. The reason is obvious. A man would then know when he saw an Indian he saw an enemy, and would be prepared and act accordingly."

[1] *American State Papers*, Pickens to Blount, Hopewell, April 28, 1792.

The people of Tennessee were the wronged, and not the wrong-doers, and it was upon them that the heaviest strokes of the Indians fell. The Georgia frontiers were also harried continually, although much less severely; but the Georgians were themselves far from blameless. Georgia was the youngest, weakest, and most lawless of the original thirteen States, and on the whole her dealings with the Indians were far from creditable. More than once she inflicted shameful wrong on the Cherokees. The Creeks, however, generally wronged her more than she wronged them, and at this particular period even the Georgia frontiersmen were much less to blame than were their Indian foes. By fair treaty, the Indians had agreed to cede to the whites lands upon which they now refused to allow them to settle. They continually plundered and murdered the outlying Georgia settlers; and the militia, in their retaliatory expeditions, having no knowledge of who the murderers actually were, quite as often killed the innocent as the guilty. One of the complaints of the Indians was that the Georgians came in parties to hunt on the neutral ground, and slew quantities of deer and turkeys by fire-hunting at night and by still-hunting with the rifle in the daytime, while they killed many bears by the aid of their "great gangs of dogs." [1] This

[1] *American State Papers*, Timothy Barnard to James Seagrove, March 26, 1793.

could hardly be called a legitimate objection on the part of the Creeks, however, for their own hunting-parties ranged freely through the lands they had ceded to the whites and killed game wherever they could find it.

Evil and fearful deeds were done by both sides. Peaceful Indians, even envoys, going to the treaty grounds, were slain in cold blood; and all that the Georgians could allege by way of offset was that the savages themselves had killed many peaceful whites. The Georgia frontiersmen openly showed their sullen hatred of the United States authorities. The Georgia State government was too weak to enforce order. It could neither keep the peace among its own frontiersmen, nor wage effective war on the Indians; for when the militia did gather to invade the Creek country they were so mutinous and disorderly that the expeditions generally broke up without accomplishing anything. At one period a militia general, Elijah Clark, actually led a large party of frontiersmen into the unceded Creek hunting-grounds with the purpose of setting up an independent government; but the Georgia authorities for once summoned energy sufficient to break up this lawless community.[1]

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., pp. 260, 295, 365, 394, 397, 410, 412, 417, 427, 473, etc.; Knoxville *Gazette*, September 26, 1794. For further allusion to Clark's settlement, see Chapter I. Vol. VI.

The Georgians were thus far from guiltless themselves, though at this time they were more sinned against than sinning; but in the Tennessee territory the white settlers behaved very well throughout these years, and showed both patience and fairness in their treatment of the Indians. Blount did his best to prevent outrages, and Sevier and Robertson heartily seconded him. In spite of the grumbling of the frontiersmen, and in spite of repeated and almost intolerable provocation in the way of Indian forays, Blount steadily refused to allow counter expeditions into the Indian territory, and stopped both the Tennesseeans and Kentuckians when they prepared to make such expeditions.[1] Judge Campbell, the same man who was himself attacked by the Indians when returning from his circuit, in his charge to the grand jury, at the end of 1791, particularly warned them to stop any lawless attack upon the Indians. In November, 1792, when five Creeks, headed by a Scotch half-breed, retreated to the Cherokee town of Chiloa with stolen horses, a band of fifty whites gathered to march after them and destroy the Cherokee town; but Sevier dispersed them and made them go to their own homes. The following February a still larger band gathered to attack the Cherokee towns, and were dispersed by Blount

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, January 8, 1793; to Benjamin Logan, November 1, 1794, etc.

himself. Robertson, in the summer of 1793, prevented militia parties from crossing the Tennessee in retaliation. In October, 1794, the grand jury of Hamilton County entreated and adjured the people, in spite of the Indian outrages to stand firmly by the law, and not to try to be their own avengers; and when some whites settled in Powell's Valley, on Cherokee lands, Governor Blount promptly turned them off.[1]

The unfortunate Indian agent among the Creeks, Seagrove, speedily became an object of special detestation to the frontiersmen generally, and the inhabitants of the Tennessee country in particular, because he persistently reported that he thought the Creeks peaceable, and deemed their behavior less blamable than that of the whites. His attitude was natural, for probably most of the Creek chiefs with whom he came in contact were friendly, and many of those who were not professed to be when in his company, if only for the sake of getting the goods he had to distribute; and of course they brought him word whenever the Georgians killed a Creek, either innocent or guilty, without telling him of the offence which the Georgians were blindly trying to revenge. Seagrove himself had some rude awakenings. After reporting to the

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, December 31, 1791; November 17 1792; January 25, February 9, March 23, July 13, September 14, 1793; November 1 and 15, 1794; May 8, 1795.

Central Government at Philadelphia that the Creeks were warm in professing the most sincere friendship, he would suddenly find, to his horror, that they were sending off war-parties and acting in concert with the Shawnees; and at one time they actually, without any provocation, attacked a trading store kept by his own brother, and killed the two men who were managing it.[1] Most of the Creeks, however, professed and doubtless felt regret at these outrages, and Seagrove continued to represent their conduct in a favorable light to the Central Government, though he was forced to admit that certain of the towns were undoubtedly hostile and could not be controlled by the party which was for peace.

Blount was much put out at the fact that Seagrove was believed at Philadelphia when he reported the Creeks to be at peace. In a letter to Seagrove, at the beginning of 1794, Blount told him sharply that as far as the Cumberland district was concerned the Creeks had been the only ones to blame since the treaty of New York, for they killed or enslaved over two hundred whites, attacking them in their houses, fields, or on the public roads, and had driven off over a thousand horses, while the Americans had done the Creeks no injury whatever except in defence of their

[1] *American State Papers*, Seagrove to James Holmes, February 24, 1793; to Mr. Payne, April 14, 1793.

homes and lives, or in pursuing war-parties. It was possible, of course, that occasionally an innocent hunter suffered with the guilty marauders but this was because he was off his own hunting-grounds; and the treaty explicitly showed that the Creeks had no claim to the Cumberland region, while there was not a particle of truth in their assertion that since the treaty had been entered into there had been intrusion on their hunting-grounds. Seagrove, in response, wrote that he believed the Creeks and Cherokees sincerely desired peace. This was followed forthwith by new outrages, and Blount wrote to Robertson: "It does really seem as if assurances from Mr. Seagrove of the peaceful disposition of the Creeks was the prelude to their murdering and plundering the inhabitants of your district." [1] The Knoxville *Gazette* called attention to the fact that Seagrove had written a letter to the effect that the Creeks were well disposed, just four days before the attack on Buchanan's Station. On September 22d, Seagrove wrote, stating that the Creeks were peaceable, that all their chief men ardently wished for the cessation of hostilities, and that they had refused the request of the Cherokees to go to war

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, February 13, 1793; Blount to James Seagrove, January 9, 1794; Seagrove to Blount, February 10, 1794; Blount to Robertson, March 8, 1794.

with the United States; and his deputy agent, Barnard, reiterated the assertions, and stated that the upper Creeks had remained quiet, although six of their people had been killed at the mouth of the Tennessee. The *Gazette* thereupon published a list of twenty-one men, women, and children who at that very time were held in slavery in the Creek towns, and enumerated scores of murders which had been committed by the Creeks during precisely the period when Seagrove and Barnard described them as so desirous of peace.[1]

Under such circumstances, the settlers naturally grew indignant with the United States because they were not protected, and were not even allowed to defend themselves by punishing their foes. The Creeks and Cherokees were receiving their annuities regularly, and many presents in addition, while their outrages continued unceasingly. The Nashville people complained that the Creeks were "as busy in killing and scalping as if they had been paid three thousand dollars for doing so, in the room of fifteen hundred dollars to keep the peace."[2] A public address was issued in the Knoxville *Gazette* by the Tennesseeans on the subjects of their wrongs. In respectful and loyal language, but firmly, the Tennesseeans called the attention of the Government authorities to their sufferings.

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, December 29, 1792; December 19, 1793.
[2] *Ibid.*, March 23, 1793.

They avowed the utmost devotion to the Union and a determination to stand by the laws, but insisted that it would be absolutely necessary for them to take measures to defend themselves by retaliating on the Indians.

A feature of the address was its vivid picture of the nature of the ordinary Indian inroad and of the lack of any definite system of defence on the frontier. It stated that the Indian raid or outbreak was usually first made known either by the murder of some defenceless farmer, the escape of some Indian trader, or the warning of some friendly Indian who wished to avoid mischief. The first man who received the news, not having made any agreement with the other members of the community as to his course in such an emergency, ran away to his kinsfolk as fast as he could. Every neighbor caught the alarm, thought himself the only person left to fight, and got off on the same route as speedily as possible, until, luckily for all, the meeting of the roads on the general retreat, the difficulty of the way, the straying of horses, and sometimes the halting to drink whisky, put a stop to "the hurly-burly of the flight," and reminded the fugitives that by this time they were in sufficient force to rally; and then they would return "to explore the plundered country and to bury the unfortunate scalped heads in the fag-end of the retreat"; whereas, if there had been an appointed rendezvous,

where all could rally, it would have prevented such a flight from what might possibly have been a body of Indians far inferior in numbers to the armed men of the settlements attacked.[1]

The convention of Mero district early petitioned Congress for the right to retaliate on the Indians and to follow them to their towns, stating that they had refrained from doing so hitherto not from cowardice, but only from regard to government, and that they regretted that their "rulers" (the Federal authorities at Philadelphia) did not enter into their feelings or seem to sympathize with them.[2] When the Territorial Legislature met, in 1794, it petitioned Congress for war against the Creeks and Cherokees, reciting the numerous outrages committed by them upon the whites; stating that since 1792 the frontiersmen had been huddled together two or three hundred to the station, anxiously expecting peace, or a legally authorized war from which they would soon wring peace; and adding that they were afraid of war in no shape, but that they asked that their hands be unbound and they be allowed to defend themselves in the only possible manner, by offensive war. They went on to say that, as members of the nation, they heartily approved of the hostilities which were then being carried on against the Algerines

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, April 6, 1793.
[2] *Ibid.*, August 13, 1792.

for the protection of the seafaring men of the coast-towns, and concluded: "The citizens who live in poverty on the extreme frontier are as much entitled to be protected in their lives, their families, and their little properties, as those who roll in luxury, ease, and affluence in the great and opulent Atlantic cities,"—for in frontier eyes the little seaboard trading-towns assumed a rather comical aspect of magnificence. The address was, on the whole, dignified in tone, and it undoubtedly set forth both the wrong and the remedy with entire accuracy. The Tennesseeans felt bitterly that the Federal Government did everything for Kentucky and nothing for themselves, and they were rather inclined to sneer at the difficulty experienced by the Kentuckians and the Federal army in subduing the northwestern Indians, while they themselves were left single-handed to contend with the more numerous tribes of the South. They were also inclined to laugh at the continual complaints the Georgians made over the comparatively trivial wrongs they suffered from the Indians, and at their inability either to control their own people or to make war effectively.[1]

Such a state of things as that which existed in the Tennessee territory could not endure. The failure of the United States authorities to undertake active offensive warfare and to protect

[1] Knoxville *Gazette*, February 26, 1794, March 27, 1794, etc.

the frontiersmen rendered it inevitable that the frontiersmen should protect themselves; and, under the circumstances, when retaliation began it was certain sometimes to fall upon the blameless. The rude militia officers began to lead their retaliatory parties into the Indian lands, and soon the innocent Indians suffered with the guilty, for the frontiersmen had no means of distinguishing between them. The Indians who visited the settlements with peaceful intent were of course at any time liable to be mistaken for their brethren who were hostile, or else to be attacked by scoundrels who were bent upon killing all red men alike. Thus, on one day, as Blount reported, a friendly Indian passing the home of one of the settlers was fired upon and wounded; while in the same region five hostile Indians killed the wife and three children of a settler in his sight; and another party stole a number of horses from a station; and yet another party, composed of peaceful Indian hunters, was attacked at night by some white militia, one man being killed and another wounded.[1]

One of the firm friends of the whites was Scolacutta, the chief of the upper Cherokees. He tried to keep his people at peace, and repeatedly

[1] State Department MSS., Washington Papers, War Department, Ex. C., page 19, extract of letter from Blount to Williamson, April 14, 1792.

warned the whites of impending attacks. Nevertheless, he was unwilling or unable to stop by force the war-parties of Creeks and lower Cherokees who came through his towns to raid against the settlements and who retreated to them again when the raids were ended. Many of his young men joined the bands of horse-thieves and scalp-hunters. The marauders wished to embroil him with the whites, and were glad that the latter should see the bloody trails leading back to his towns. For two years after the signing of the treaty of Holston the war-parties thus passed and repassed through his country, and received aid and comfort from his people, and yet the whites refrained from taking vengeance; but the vengeance was certain to come in the end.

In March, 1793, Scolacutta's nearest neighbor, an Indian living next door to him in his own town, and other Indians of the nearest towns, joined one of the war-parties, which attacked the settlements and killed two unarmed lads.[1] The Indians did nothing to the murderers, and the whites forbore to attack them; but their patience was nearly exhausted. In June following, a captain, John Beard, with fifty mounted riflemen, fell in with a small party of Indians who had killed several settlers. He followed their trail to Scolacutta's

[1] *American State Papers*, Blount's letter, March 20, 1793. Scolacutta was usually known to the whites as Hanging Maw.

town, where he slew eight or nine Indians, most of whom were friendly.[1] The Indians clamored for justice and the surrender of the militia who had attacked them. Blount warmly sympathized with them, but when he summoned a court-martial to try Beard it promptly acquitted him, and the general frontier feeling was strongly in his favor. Other militia commanders followed his example. Again and again they trailed the war-parties, laden with scalps and plunder, and attacked the towns to which they went, killing the warriors and capturing squaws and children.[2]

The following January another party of red marauders was tracked by a band of riflemen to Scolacutta's camp. The militia promptly fell on the camp and killed several Indians, both the hostile and the friendly. Other Cherokee towns were attacked and partially destroyed. In but one instance were the whites beaten off. When once the whites fairly began to make retaliatory inroads they troubled themselves but little as to whether the Indians they assailed were or were not those who had wronged them. In one case, four frontiersmen dressed and painted themselves like Indians prior to starting on a foray to avenge the murder of a neighbor. They could not find the

[1] Robertson MSS., Smith to Robertson, June 19, 1793, etc.; Knoxville *Gazette*, June 15 and July 13, 1793, etc.

[2] Knoxville *Gazette*, July 13, July 27, 1793, etc.

trail of the murderers, and so went at random to a Cherokee town, killed four warriors who were asleep on the ground, and returned to the settlements. Scolacutta at first was very angry with Blount, and taunted him with his inability to punish the whites, asserting that the frontiersmen were "making fun" of their well-meaning governor; but the old chief soon made up his mind that as long as he allowed the war-parties to go through his towns he would have to expect to suffer at the hands of the injured settlers. He wrote to Blount enumerating the different murders that had been committed by both sides, and stating that his people were willing to let the misdeeds stand as offsetting one another. He closed his letter by stating that the upper towns were for peace, and added: "I want my mate, General Sevier, to see my talk . . . We have often told lies, but now you may depend on hearing the truth," which was a refreshingly frank admission.[1]

When, towards the close of 1792, the ravages became very serious, Sevier, the man whom the Indians feared more than any other, was called to take command of the militia. For a year he confined himself to acting on the defensive, and even thus he was able to give much protection to the settlements. In September, 1793, however,

[1] *American State Papers*, iv., pp. 459, 460, etc.; **Knoxville** *Gazette*, January 16 and June 5, 1794.

several hundred Indians, mostly Cherokees, crossed the Tennessee not thirty miles from Knoxville. They attacked a small station, within which there were but thirteen souls, who, after some resistance, surrendered on condition that their lives should be spared; but they were butchered with obscene cruelty. Sevier immediately marched toward the assailants, who fled back to the Cherokee towns. Thither Sevier followed them, and went entirely through the Cherokee country to the land of the Creeks, burning the towns and destroying the stores of provisions. He marched with his usual quickness, and the Indians were never able to get together in sufficient numbers to oppose him. When he crossed High Town River there was a skirmish, but he soon routed the Indians, killing several of their warriors, and losing himself but three men killed and three wounded. He utterly destroyed a hostile Creek town, the chief of which was named Buffalo Horn. He returned late in October, and after his return the frontiers of eastern Tennessee had a respite from the Indian ravages. Yet Congress refused to pay his militia for the time they were out, because they had invaded the Indian country instead of acting on the defensive.[1]

To chastise the upper Cherokee towns gave relief to the settlements on the Holston, but the

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount to Robertson, October 29, 1793; Knoxville *Gazette*, October 12 and November 23, 1793.

chief sinners were the Chickamaugas of the lower Cherokee towns, and the chief sufferers were the Cumberland settlers. The Cumberland people were irritated beyond endurance, alike by the ravages of these Indians and by the conduct of the United States in forbidding them to retaliate. In September, 1794, they acted for themselves. Early in the month Robertson received certain information that a large body of Creeks and lower Cherokees had gathered at the towns and were preparing to invade the Cumberland settlements. The best way to meet them was by a stroke in advance, and he determined to send an expedition against them in their strongholds. There was no question whatever as to the hostility of the Indians, for at this very time settlers were being killed by war-parties throughout the Cumberland country. Some Kentuckians, under Colonel Whitley, had joined the Tennesseeans, who were nominally led by a Major Ore; but the various frontier fighters, including Kasper Mansker, were really as much in command as was Ore. Over five hundred mounted-riflemen, bold of heart and strong of hand, marched toward the Chickamauga towns, which contained some three hundred warriors. When they came to the Tennessee they spent the entire night in ferrying the arms across and swimming the horses; they used bundles of dry cane for rafts, and made four "bull-boats" out of the hides of steers. They

passed over unobserved and fell on the towns of Nickajack and Running Water, taking the Indians completely by surprise; they killed fifty-five warriors and captured nineteen squaws and children. In the entire expedition but one white man was killed and three wounded.[1]

Not only the Federal authorities, but Blount himself, very much disapproved of this expedition; nevertheless, it was right and proper and produced excellent effects. In no other way could the hostile towns have been brought to reason. It was followed by a general conference with the Cherokees at Tellico Blockhouse. Scolacutta appeared for the upper, and Watts for the lower Cherokee towns. Watts admitted that "for their folly" the lower Cherokees had hitherto refused to make peace, and remarked frankly: "I do not say they did not deserve the chastisement they received." Scolacutta stated that he could not sympathize much with the lower towns, saying "their own conduct brought destruction upon them. The trails of murderers and thieves was

[1] Robertson MSS., Robertson to Blount, October 8, 1794; Blount to Robertson, October 1, 1794, September 9, 1794 (in which Blount expresses the utmost disapproval of Robertson's conduct, and says he will not send on Robertson's original letter to Philadelphia, for fear it will get him into a scrape; and requests him to send a formal report which can be forwarded); Knoxville *Gazette*, September 26, 1794; Brown's "Narrative."

followed to those towns . . . Their bad conduct drew the white people on me, who injured me nearly unto death. . . . All last winter I was compelled to lay in the woods by the bad conduct of my own people drawing war on me." At last the Cherokees seemed sincere in their desire for peace.[1]

These counter-attacks served a double purpose. They awed the hostile Cherokees; and they forced the friendly Cherokees, for the sake of their own safety, actively to interfere against the bands of hostile Creeks. A Cherokee chief, The Stallion, and a number of warriors, joined with the Federal soldiers and Tennessee militia in repulsing the Creek war-parties. They acted under Blount's directions, and put a complete stop to the passage of hostile Indians through their towns.[2] The Chickasaws also had become embroiled with the Creeks.[3] For over three years they carried on an intermittent warfare with them, and were heartily supported by the frontiersmen, who were prompt to recognize the value of their services. At the same time the hostile Indians were much cowed at the news of Wayne's victory in the North.

All these causes combined to make the Creeks

[1] Robertson MSS., Blount's Minutes of Conference held with Cherokees, November 7 and 8, 1794, at Tellico Blockhouse.

[2] *Ibid.*, Ecooe to John McKee, Tellico, February 1, 1795, etc.

[3] Blount MSS., James Colbert to Robertson, February 10, 1792.

sue for peace. To its shame and discredit, the United States Government at first proposed to repeat towards the Chickasaws the treachery of which the British had just been guilty to the northern Indians; for it refused to defend them from the Creeks, against whom they had been acting, partly, it is true, for their own ends, but partly in the interest of the settlers. The frontiersmen, however, took a much more just and generous view of the affair. Mansker and a number of the best fighters in the Cumberland district marched to the assistance of the Chickasaws; and the frontier militia generally showed grateful appreciation of the way both the upper Cherokees and the Chickasaws helped them put a stop to the hostilities of the Chickamaugas and Creeks. Robertson got the Choctaws to interfere on behalf of the Chickasaws and to threaten war with the Creeks if the latter persisted in their hostilities. Moreover, the United States agents, when the treaty was actually made, behaved better than their superiors had promised, for they persuaded the Creeks to declare peace with the Chickasaws as well as with the whites.[1] Many of the peaceful Creeks had become

[1] Robertson MSS., Robertson to Blount, January 13, 1795; Blount to Robertson, January 20 and April 26, 1795; Robertson to Blount, April 20, 1795. Knoxville *Gazette*, August 25, 1792; October 12, 1793; June 19, July 17, August 4, and August 15, 1794. *American State Papers*, pp. 284, 285, etc.

so alarmed at the outlook that they began to exert pressure on their warlike brethren; and at last the hostile element yielded, though not until bitter feeling had arisen between the factions. The fact was, that the Creeks were divided, much as they were twenty years later, when the Red Sticks went to war under the inspiration of the Prophet; and it would have been well if Wayne had been sent south to invade their country and anticipate, by twenty years, Jackson's feats. But the nation was not yet ready for such strong measures. The Creeks were met half way in their desire for peace; and the entire tribe concluded a treaty, the provisions of which were substantially those of the treaty of New York. They ceased all hostilities, together with the Cherokees.

The concluding stage of the negotiations was marked by an incident which plainly betrayed the faulty attitude of the National Government towards southwestern frontiersmen. With incredible folly, Timothy Pickering, at this time Secretary of War, blindly refused to see the necessity of what had been done by Blount and the Tennessee frontiersmen. In behalf of the administration, he wrote a letter to Blount which was as offensive as it was fatuous. In it he actually blamed Blount for getting the Cherokees and Chickasaws to help protect the frontier against the hostile Indians. He forbade him to give any assistance to the

Chickasaws. He announced that he disapproved of The Stallion's deeds, and that the Cherokees must not destroy Creeks passing through their country on the way to the frontier. He even intimated that the surrender of The Stallion to the Creeks would be a good thing. As for protecting the frontier from the ravages of the Creeks, he merely vouchsafed the statement that he would instruct Seagrove to make "some pointed declarations" to the Creeks on the subject! He explained that the United States Government was resolved not to have a direct or indirect war with the Creeks; and he closed by reiterating, with futile insistency, that the instruction to the Cherokees not to permit Creek war-parties against the whites to come through their country, did not warrant their using force to stop them.[1] He failed to point out how it was possible, without force, to carry out these instructions.

A more shameful letter was never written, and it was sufficient of itself to show Pickering's conspicuous incapacity for the position he held. The trouble was that he represented, not very unfairly, the sentiment of a large portion of the eastern and especially the northeastern people. When Blount visited Philadelphia in the summer of 1793, to urge a vigorous national war as the only thing which could bring the Indians to behave

[1] Robertson MSS., Pickering to Blount, March 23, 1795.

themselves,[1] he reported that Washington had an entirely just idea of the whole Indian business, but that Congress generally knew little of the matter and was not disposed to act.[2] His report was correct; and he might have added that the congressmen were no more ignorant, and no more reluctant to do right, than their constituents.

The truth is that the United States Government, during the six years from 1791 to 1796, behaved shamefully to the people who were settled along the Cumberland and Holston. This was the more inexcusable in view of the fact that, thanks to the example of Blount, Sevier, and Robertson, the Tennesseeans, alone among the frontiersmen, showed an intelligent appreciation of the benefits of the Union and a readiness to render it loyal support. The Kentuckians acted far less rationally; yet the Government tolerated much misconduct on their part, and largely for their benefit carried on a great national war against the northwestern Indians. In the Southwest almost all that the administration did was to prohibit the frontiersmen from protecting themselves. Peace was finally brought about largely through the effect of Wayne's victory, and the knowledge of the Creeks that they would have to stand alone in any further

[1] Blount MSS., Blount to Smith, June 17, 1793.

[2] Robertson MSS., Blount to gentleman in Cumberland, Philadelphia, August 28, 1793.

warfare; but it would not have been obtained at all if Sevier and the other frontier leaders had not carried on their destructive counter-inroads into the Cherokee and upper Creek country, and if under Robertson's orders Nickajack and Running Water had not been destroyed; while the support of the Chickasaws and friendly Cherokees in stopping the Creek war-parties was essential. The Southwesterners owed thanks to General Wayne and his army and to their own strong right hands; but they had small cause for gratitude to the Federal Government. They owed still less to the Northeasterners, or indeed to any of the men of the eastern seaboard; the benefits arising from Pinckney's treaty form the only exception. This neglect brought its own punishment. Blount and Sevier were naturally inclined to Federalism, and it was probably only the supineness of the Federal Government in failing to support the Southwesterners against the Indians which threw Tennessee, when it became a State, into the arms of the Democratic party.

However, peace was finally wrung from the Indians, and by the beginning of 1796 the outrages ceased. The frontiers, north and south alike, enjoyed a respite from Indian warfare for the first time in a generation; nor was the peace interrupted until fifteen years afterwards.

Throngs of emigrants had come into Tennessee.

A wagon-road had been chopped to the Cumberland district, and as the Indians gradually ceased their ravages, the settlements about Nashville began to grow as rapidly as the settlements along the Holston. In 1796 the required limit of population had been reached, and Tennessee, with over seventy-six thousand inhabitants, was formally admitted as a State of the Federal Union; Sevier was elected governor, Blount was made one of the senators, and Andrew Jackson was chosen representative in Congress. In their State constitution the hard-working backwoods farmers showed a conservative spirit which would seem strange to the radical democracy of new western States today. An elective governor and two legislative houses were provided; and the representation was proportioned, not to the population at large, but to the citizen who paid taxes; for persons with some little property were still considered to be the rightful depositaries of political power. The constitution established freedom of the press, and complete religious liberty—a liberty then denied in the parent State of North Carolina; but it contained some unwise and unjust provisions. The judges were appointed by the Legislature, and were completely subservient to it; and, through the influence of the land speculators, all lands except town lots were taxed alike, so that the men who had obtained possession of the best tracts

shifted to other shoulders much of their own proper burden.[1]

[1] *Constitutional History of Tennessee*, by Joshua W. Caldwell (p. 101), another of Robert Clarke's publications; an admirable study of institutional development in Tennessee.

END OF VOLUME V.

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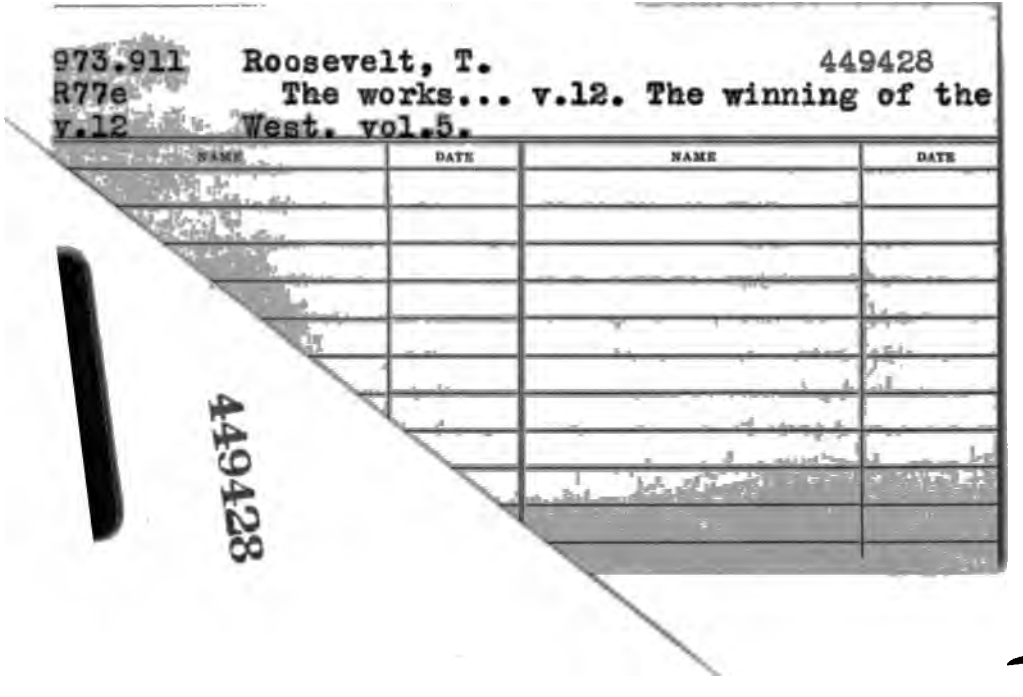
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